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Conflict in Cooperation:
Language Ideological Debates in the Negotiation of Linguistic and Sociocultural Rapprochement in the Post-Cold War Era Turkic World

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by

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Dedication

For my parents who have always made all things possible,
For the two beloved grandmothers I lost while in the field,
For Zephyr, magnificent muse,
For Thayne Timurzhan, my son of conquerors, who, by force of will, made me his *ana*
And, most of all, for Memo who is the breath that animates me in all things

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Preface

With indulgences requested, I would like to begin with an ode to ethnographic fieldwork, which allows one to set off in search of one thing and discover something altogether different. It is serendipity, the experience of the ordinary and the extraordinary, it is the active cultivation of the ability to be surprised, it is peripheral vision and an appreciation of negative space, it is life lived in the interstices, it is the joy of inclusion and the pain of exclusion, it is self-discovery and recognition of other, but more than anything it is hearing and seeing the wonder in what has always been and is right in front of one all along. In this way, ethnography is life itself as it should always be lived.

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This dissertation examines three phases in post-Cold War relations between Turkey and the ex-Soviet Turkic republics of Central Asia and the Caucasus, not from the macro-level perspective of political and economic protocols and accords agreed by state actors, which has been ably outlined by other scholars, but rather from the micro-level perspective of efforts pursued on a less formal plane to promote linguistic rapprochement among the disparate Turkic peoples. The actors in this unfolding drama were an shifting collective of interested individuals, composed predominantly of linguists and language professionals, who were readily classifiable neither as official representatives of their respective nations, nor solely as invested individuals acting in their own interests, but rather operated at the meso level and comprised, I would argue, a "community of practice" dedicated to uniting the Turkic peoples linguistically, socioculturally, and perhaps even geopolitically under the rubric of an emergent supranational "Turkic world."

In exploring the shifting sands of supranational relations in the post-Soviet Turkic world through the lens of linguistic rapprochement, I focus, in particular, on two ostensibly discrete language ideological debates--the first centered around a series of

early Turkic linguistic congresses held during the initial phase of post-Soviet Turkic relations that focused on the creation of a common Turkic alphabet (*ortak alfabe*) and Turkic *lingua franca* (*ortak dil*), and the second emerging during the third phase of relations among the Turkic peoples that focused on defending the Turkish alphabet from pernicious "outside" influence, where "outside" was largely identified as "the West" yet intersected in interesting, ways with the "outside Turks" (*dış Türkler*) of Central Asia and the Caucasus. In addition, I reconstruct the transitional "bridge" between the first and third phases of Turkic relations by also examining the dimensions of ongoing discussion and debate over issues of language, orthography, and identity both in Turkey and in the emergent Turkic world that, although more diffuse and less formal by nature than the two debates described above nonetheless, I argue, constitute two additional language ideological debates which together define the second stage of relations among the Turkic peoples in the post-Cold War era.

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Chapter One: Three Phases and Four Debates: Post-Cold War Relations in the Turkic World and the Language Ideological Debates that Define Them

Türklerin ana yurdu Türkçedir (The motherland of Turks is Turkish)

Turkish saying

The fate of the language is the fate of the people

Kyrgyz saying[1]

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation examines three phases in post-Cold War relations between Turkey and the ex-Soviet Turkic republics of Central Asia and the Caucasus, not from the macro-level perspective of political and economic protocols and accords agreed by state actors, which has been ably outlined by other scholars, but rather from the micro-level perspective of efforts pursued on a less formal plane to promote linguistic rapprochement among the disparate Turkic peoples. The actors in this unfolding drama were a shifting collective of interested individuals, composed predominantly of linguists and language professionals, who were readily classifiable neither as official representatives of their respective nations, nor solely as invested individuals acting in their own interests, but rather operated at the meso level and comprised, I would argue, a "community of practice" (Lave and Wenger 1991, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992, Wenger 1993)

[1] As quoted in Landau and Kellner-Heinkele (2001).

dedicated to uniting the Turkic peoples linguistically, socioculturally, and perhaps even geopolitically under the rubric of an emergent supranational "Turkic world."

In exploring the shifting sands of supranational relations in the post-Soviet Turkic world through the lens of linguistic rapprochement, I focus, in particular, on two ostensibly discrete language ideological debates (Blommaert 1999)--the first centered around a series of early Turkic linguistic congresses held during the initial phase of post-Soviet Turkic relations that focused on the creation of a common Turkic alphabet (*ortak alfabe*) that would serve as the foundation for the creation of a Turkic *lingua franca* (*ortak dil*), and the second emerging during the third phase of relations among the Turkic peoples that focused on defending the Turkish alphabet from pernicious "outside" influence, where "outside" was largely identified as "the West" yet intersected in interesting, ways with the "outside Turks" (*dış Türkler*) of Central Asia and the Caucasus. In addition, I reconstruct the transitional "bridge" between the first and third phases of Turkic relations by also examining the dimensions of ongoing discussion and debate over issues of language, orthography, and identity both in Turkey and in the emergent Turkic world that, although more diffuse and less formal by nature than the two debates described above nonetheless, I argue, constitute two additional language ideological debates which together define the second stage of relations among the Turkic peoples in the post-Cold War era.

The conceit behind this approach to relations in the post-Soviet Turkic world lies in the belief that by studying local, micro-level discourses of broad macro-level constructs, such as "nationalism" and "pan-Turkism," that informed the abovementioned

language ideological debates, it is possible to lend critical ethnographic detail to broad sociopolitical shifts, such as were occasioned by the fall of the Soviet Union and end of the Cold War, that thereby challenge dominant, but facile, political and economic explanations of "postsocialist" relations which have tended to coalesce under such rubrics as "transition" and "globalism" (see also Gal 1994, Gal and Kligman 2000, Verdery 1996 and 1997, Ries 2002). From the perspective of history, political science, and international relations, then, this study seeks to discover what Hobsbawm (1990) identifies as "the view from below." Although, in suggesting that this view from below "is exceedingly difficult to discover," Hobsbawm was referring to "the nation," specifically "the nation as seen not by governments and the spokesmen and activists of nationalist…movements, but by the ordinary persons who are the objects of their action and propaganda," and Blommaert and Verschueren, who take Hobsbawm's caveat as a departure point for exploring the role of language in European nationalist ideologies from the perspective of the "everyman," also organize their investigation around the reified construct of "the nation," suggesting that "[a]n assessment of the ideological processes involved [in nation-building and nationalism] requires access to the 'view from below'" (1998:189), I would argue that Hobsbawm's insight nonetheless holds true more generally and that a "view from below" is likewise essential in creating an understanding of other broadly imagined social constructs and identity formulations, such as the supranationalist, pan-Turkist notions of collective ethnolinguistic identity that emerged among the Turkic peoples following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

At the same time, this dissertation seeks to contribute to scholarly discourses in anthropology that, despite a defining focus on the particular and the local, nonetheless insist on explicating the processes by which the local is linked to the national, regional, international, and global. Central to an approach that seeks to explore such linkages between the narrowly defined ethnographic problematic and the larger context of its instantiation is the need to emplace specific practices and processes within the context of the broader historical, political, and economic discourses within which they have emerged and the narratives of power than run through them (Wolf 1982). As Caroline Humphrey notes in a collection of essays on the "unmaking" of Soviet life, in adopting such an approach "one may start with the exception… one is enabled to take almost any event or action as significant in itself and representing no more than itself. But because the anthropologist 'sees it' in all its dimensions of interpretability, createdness, and capacity for containing implicit power, this action can also be read for what it connotes about the world in which it exists" (2002:xix). The task, then, is to explore the particularistic with an eye to the "broader political geography" (Gal and Kligman 2000:4) of its emergence, not only because the broader context helps to explicate the specific local practice, but also because the local practice contributes to a richer understanding of operant conditions within the overarching sociopolitical milieu.

THE EMERGENT TURKIC WORLD

The emergence from the ruins of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s and early 1990s of five independent Turkic nations within Central Asia and the Caucasus (Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan) coupled with the increasing recognition of Turkic ethnicity in other regions of the former Soviet Union, awakened among this broad swath of Turkic peoples a nostalgic interest in their ethnic "brethren" and raised great expectations of supranational cooperation (e.g., Turan and Turan 1998, Winrow 1998, Başlamış 2001, Smolansky 1994, Aydın 2003a). Politicians, galvanized by legendary tales of the Turkestan of centuries past, spoke of the Turkic peoples as one nation crossing many state borders and heralded a geopolitical and sociocultural union of Turkic peoples stretching from the Black Sea to the Great Wall of China. Then president Turgut Özal repeatedly and passionately declared that the twenty-first century would be the "Turkic century" and spoke of forming both a "Turkic" Trade and Development Bank and a "Turkic" Common Market, (Winrow 1998, Çandar 1992), while then prime minister Süleyman Demirel, emphasizing cultural resonances among the peoples of this emergent geography in a speech implying that Turkey stood ready to take them under its wing, ardently enthused: "Within the 15 thousand square kilometers from the Adriatic Sea to the Great Wall of China, there is a great Turkic society with traditions, customs, lullabies, epics, and everything else" ("*Adriyatik Denizi'nden Çin Seddi'ne kadar 15 bin kilometer içerisinde an'aneleriyle, görenekleriyle, ninnisiyle, destanıyla ve herşeyiyle bir büyük Türk topluluğu vardır*.") (as quoted in Turgut 2001:19, translation mine).

"*Bir millet, iki devlet*" ("one people, two states") became the rousing, and pleasingly harmonious, slogan of the times, echoing at all levels of Turkish society and across the Turkic world, from the halls of the political elite to the stalls of the marketplace vendor. For their part, the leaders of the emergent Turkic nations responded positively to the exultant and exuberant rhetoric of "brotherhood" (*"kardeşlik"*) and cooperation, at least initially, travelling to Ankara on highly-publicized state visits and receiving distinguished Turkish diplomats and politicians with high pomp and circumstance in their home countries in aid of signing protocols and agreements on a variety of cooperative endeavors and economic aid packages (e.g., Smolansky 1994, Turan and Turan 1998, Winrow 1998, Aydın 2003a). Nostalgia for and genuine curiosity about their "brother Turks" was also palpable among average citizens of the Turkic republics when I first travelled to the region in the early 1990s and, speaking Turkish (or Azeri with a Turkish accent), was often, and usually to my benefit, mistaken for a Turk.

In the ensuing years, Turkey, as the sole member of this putative Turkic world with the economic wherewithal and international political standing to turn rhetoric into concrete action, strove to do so. Pledging Turkish support and offering the Turkish nation as both a developmental "model" for the nascent Turkic nations and as "window" or "bridge" to the Western world (e.g., Olcott 1996, Smolansky 1994, Aydın 1996, Winrow 1998, Turan and Turan 1998, Rashid 1994, Fridman 1994), Turkish diplomats opened missions in the far-flung reaches of Central Asia; politicians prepared high-profile protocols for cooperation in media and communications, education, and

economics; and businessmen, with state encouragement and support, established joint business ventures with Central Asian counterparts, inexperienced in the practices of the free market system but eager to learn its fundamentals. (e.g., Turan and Turan 1998, Bal 2000, Devlet 2001, Pope 2005, Aydın 2003a, Turgut 2001).

The notion that Turkey might act as a developmental "model" for the newly independent Turkic nations also had resonance in Central Asia and the Caucasus, particularly in contrast to the Iranian model Tehran was actively promoting amongst its new neighbors. Although the Turkic leaders by and large declared their fledgling nations interested in pursuing their own path in development, they also all noted, to greater or lesser degrees, that the Turkish experience of peaceful transition to a market economy, albeit problematic in certain regards, was relevant in informing their approach (e.g., Sander 1994, Blank 1994, Israeli 1994, Smolansky 1994, Demir 1996). In a poetic turn of phrase, President Askar Akayev of Kyrgyzstan declared Turkey to be "the morning star that shows the Turkic republics the way."[2] Furthermore, the possibility of a "Turkish model" for Central Asia had generated significant interest in the West, again amid fears that the Iranian model might emerge ascendant (e.g., Mango 1993, Vassiliev 1994, and Winrow 1992). In February 1992, the ex-Soviet republics were visited by then U.S Secretary of State James Baker who promoted their adopting a "Turkish model" of development, and in June 1992, then Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Catherine Lalumière, visited the region with what amounted to the same message (Mango

[2] Akayev was quoted in *The Economist* April 25, 1992, p.34.

1993). In light of such visits, some Turkish analysts have suggested that purveying the Turkish model for development in the ex-Soviet Turkic republics was the brainchild of Western diplomats (Yalçın 1993, Mango 1993), but there is ample evidence that Turkish diplomats were themselves already pursuing such a tack, not only among the ex-Soviet Turkic republics themselves but also with Turkey's Western allies, albeit not always under the "Turkish model" rubric (e.g., Somalansky 1994, Turan and Turan 1998, Aydın 2003a).

In the halcyon days of early contact between the Turkic peoples, it was, however, scholars, particularly linguists and other language professionals, who were at the vanguard of efforts to promote Turkic consolidation, organizing a series of Turkic linguistic congresses with the express intention of achieving linguistic rapprochement among the Turkic peoples. Designed to usher in an era of increased cooperation which would pave the way for eventual sociocultural and geopolitical affiliation, synthesis, and potential union under the rubric of the Turkic world, these efforts were focused, first, on the development of a common Turkic alphabet (*ortak alfabe*) which would set the stage for the formulation of a Turkic *lingua franca* (*ortak dil*) for use among the Turkic peoples. Although centered around issues of orthography and language, the metalinguistic discourses that emerged within and surrounded the early Turkic linguistic congresses also revealed the underlying ideological complexity of supranational affiliation in the post-Soviet era.

Although the *ortak alfabe* project soon foundered on ideological, political, and pragmatic grounds, and the *ortak dil* project was thus never formally pursued past an

initial conceptual phase, the ideological issues raised during the course of the early language congresses nonetheless created a synergistically charged intellectual environment which fostered ongoing engagement with the linguistic dimensions of supranational rapprochement and national consolidation in the post-Soviet era. While the issue of orthographic unification remained salient, and topics related to orthographic and linguistic rapprochement continued to be discussed at numerous linguistic conferences, Turcology conventions, and Turkic world events, however, the dimensions of ongoing linguistic debate shifted substantially over time in ways which both contributed to and were characteristic of successive phases of Turkic world relations. By exploring the metadiscursive dynamics of the early linguistic congresses, conceived during the euphoric phase of first contact amongst the Turkic peoples, as well as the successive series of language ideological debates--both focused and diffuse, emerging metadiscursively and in praxis--that ensued as the dimensions of national identity formation and pan-Turkic affiliation were negotiated, this study thus seeks to add critical detail to emergent understandings of identity politics in the post-Cold War era Turkic world which ultimately framed broader efforts toward geopolitical rapprochement among the Turkic peoples.

POLITICAL PARADIGM FOR POST-COLD WAR RELATIONS IN THE EMERGENT TURKIC WORLD

In a thoughtful retrospective assessment of the development of political and economic relations between Turkey and the Turkic peoples of Central Asia and the Caucasus, around which this study is framed, Turan and Turan (1998:179) delineate three phases of post-Cold War relations in the Turkic world. Critical to their paradigm is the observation that the phases are not distinguishable in terms of specific events, and while therefore best constructed as "fluctuations on a continuum" rather than discrete stages, nonetheless "reflect transformations of the outlooks that have given direction to the relationship." The first phase of relations, they suggest, was marked by "high levels of optimism and expectations about the future," while the second was defined by "the mutual discovery of constraints that helped define the limits of the relationship," and the third revolved around the "routinization of the relationship." While in agreement with their characterization of the first two phases of relations, I would, however, suggest a slightly more nuanced reading of the third phase.

Although "routinization," with its sense of habitual pragmatism, might well describe relations in the political and economic spheres as the details of accords and agreements signed in phases one and two were worked out, to my mind, it fails to adequately capture the prevailing outlook, or "mood," that pervaded all levels of society both in Turkey and amongst the Turkic peoples and that was most palpable in metalinguistic discourses about linguistic rapprochement in the Turkic world. In this sense, I would suggest that relations within the post-Soviet Turkic world transitioned

from an initial phase of "euphoria" through a stage of bilateral "sobering" to end in a persistent mutual sense of "disillusionment," within which a requiem for "what might have been" was a consistent and palpable theme, resulting in a steadfast and self-interested focus on pragmatism that persists to this day. Ultimately, I argue, it is this pervasive mood of disillusionment that best explains the failure of the Turkic peoples, despite their ongoing engagement at the political and economic levels, to coalesce under the rubric of the Turkic world, as initially envisioned, or even to develop the "special relationship" that often characterizes international relations between countries that share linguistic, ethnic, religious, and/or historical ties.

Insofar as I have already employed the term "bilateral" to describe post-Cold War relations in the Turkic world, it is important, at this juncture, to note that while the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples, whether as a result of Soviet "encouragement" or innate inclination, exhibit distinct differences from one another, there was, in the words of Turan and Turan, "a tendency on the part of Turkey to view other Turkic states as constituting a reasonably homogeneous whole, not harbouring significant conflicts of interest among themselves." They continue: "This exaggerated perception of unity derived, on one hand, from earlier lack of familiarity with the region and, on the other hand, from projections of hopes and aspirations" (1998:188). In light of this undeniable reality of early relations between Turkey and the Turkic peoples, I will, despite occasionally choosing to highlight the differences among the Turkic peoples, particularly when such differences *made* a difference in the dynamics of the language ideological debates I examine, generally follow suit, focusing on the obvious similarities among the

ex-Soviet Turkic peoples rather than the patent differences and hence treating them as a relatively cohesive bloc in bilateral relations with Turkey.

I justify this approach by noting that not only did the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples share the broad strokes of a recent and defining history under the Soviet Union, which bound them to one another as it distinguished them from Turkey, but also that they each faced the same prevailing concerns in the post-Soviet era, namely those related to the successful establishment of an independent nation.[3] Furthermore, I would note that my primary vantage point in examining relations within the Turkic world in the post-Cold War era resides with Turkey and emphasize the appropriateness, therefore, of adopting the Turkish perspective on the nature of the Turkic peoples as related to establishing such relations. To this I would add, as will be addressed in subsequent chapters, that not only was it Turkey's initial tendency to speciously overestimate the homogeneity of all Turkic peoples living in former Soviet lands, but also to overrate the degree to which the Turkic peoples, as a whole, approximated Anatolian Turks--i.e., were "just like us." The issues arising from such a perspective will become clearer in subsequent chapters. Finally, I would note that, in speaking of "bilateral" relations and otherwise borrowing the terminology of political science and international relations in an attempt to both broadly contextualize efforts at linguistic rapprochement in the Turkic world and suggest the

[3] Although of all the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples, only those with defined nations--i.e., Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan--were concerned with nation-building in the truest sense of establishing an independent nation state, the autonomous Turkic peoples--e.g., the Chuvash, Bashkurds, and especially the Tatars--were also engaged in "national" identity-making, albeit within the framework of a larger central state, namely Russia.

involvement of language ideological debates in framing broader efforts at post-Cold War consolidation among the Turkic peoples, "Turkey" itself is likewise reified. While this is useful at times, insofar as it suggests not only the early pervasive interest in the Turkic world within the general Turkish populace, but also the relatively unified policy-driven approach to the Turkic world taken by Turkish government officials, and the ways in which non-state actors, such as scholars and businessmen were rallied in quasi-official support of this overarching approach, in subsequent chapters I nonetheless seek to demonstrate the ways in which the "Turkish" perspective regarding the Turkic world and Turkey's role in its consolidation, even within a community of practice actively interested and involved in the negotiation of Turkic world relations, is nonetheless "partial, contested, and interest-laden" (Woolard and Schieffelin 1994:58). In short, I argue that despite an admittedly important general tendency within anthropology to eschew or problematize such overarching and essentializing constructs, the fact remains that such local categories of meaning persist--a fact which makes them meaningful in of themselves.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

This dissertation is rooted first and foremost in a critical approach to the study of the relationship between language and the social world which, having grown out of key avenues of investigation in linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics, as well as work in other language-related fields, has recently coalesced around the notion of language

ideologies (e.g., Woolard and Schieffelin 1994; Gal and Woolard 1995; Schieffelin, Woolard, and Kroskrity 1998; Blommaert 1999; Kroskrity 2000c). At heart, the study of language ideologies is founded on the revolutionary shift, or, to borrow Kuhn's (1962) term, scientific revolution, in scholarly approaches to the study of language occasioned by work in the disciplines of anthropology and philosophy of language that challenged an accepted focus, within the field of linguistics, on the formal structures of language over its social uses for communicative purposes. By focusing on language as a formal system defined by the structural relationship between signifier and signified, structural linguistics privileged the normative over the performative, thereby drawing a sharp division between the linguistic sign and the material world.

Beginning in the early 1960s, however, scholarship refocused attention on speech (*parole*) rather than language (*langue*) by not only attending to speaking as an "act" (Austin 1962), thereby enabling it to be analyzed alongside other social activities, but, more importantly, calling attention to the role played by the full range of "ways of speaking" in the social life of a community (Hymes 1962, Gumperz and Hymes 1964). Language was thus conceived not only as a system defined by its structural properties, but as a social activity characterized by the practices in which its speakers engaged. This perspective was transformative insofar as it advocated attending to the hitherto neglected non-referential functions and uses of language, particularly its interactional role in establishing, negotiating and maintaining social relations. In this way, this seminal paradigm shift set the stage for investigations by linguistic anthropologists and

sociolinguists alike into the relationship between language and the social world, or between language as formal system and language as a social practice.

Furthermore, by attending to local categories of communication, as well as to beliefs about and attitudes toward language, both of which were deemed extraneous distractions in structural linguistics, the emergent "ethnography of communication" approach to language and culture transformed notions of communicative competence, which, within its theoretical framework, was defined as knowledge not only of the grammatical and structural rules of language, but also its appropriate use within cultural context, thereby paving the way for later interest in language ideology. Thus, whereas structural linguists believed that to account for language attitudes, beliefs and values in defining communicative competence would be to render language "a chaos that [was] not worth studying" (Chomsky 1977b:153), scholars advocating an ethnography of communication approach argued that communicative competence was "integral with attitudes, values, and motivations concerning language, its features and uses, and integral with competence for, and attitudes toward, the interrelation of language with the other codes of communicative conduct" (Hymes 2001[1972]:60).

The study of attitudes about language, in the critical sense of language ideology (Woolard and Schieffelin 1994, Woolard 1998) was, however, a much later arrival on the scholarly scene (Kroskrity 2000a). In an influential article that set the stage for such a critical approach, Michael Silverstein defined language ideologies broadly as "any sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization of perceived language structure and use" (1979:193). Later definitions, including Woolard and Schieffelin's

depiction of language ideology as the "mediating link between social structures and forms of talk" (1994:55), placed greater emphasis on the sociocultural embeddedness of language ideology, while others, including Irvine's description of language ideology as a "cultural system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships, together with their loading of moral and political interests" (1989:255) highlighted the inherent political force of language ideologies and their involvement in relations of power within a society.

In a comprehensive review of the origins of the field of language ideology, Woolard notes that the term "ideology" has been employed in two broad senses--as "neutral, descriptive, notional…ideational, and representational" and as critical, focusing on "power and interest" and the ways in which representation is subject to deliberate distortion (1998:7-8). Language ideology, as becomes clear from the various definitions offered above, is situated at the intersection of both conceptualizations of ideology, simultaneously concerned with "the social origins of thought and representation [and with] their roots in or responsiveness to the experience of a particular social position" (Woolard 1998:10). As such, language ideologies can be both explicit and implicit, discoverable "in linguistic practice itself; in explicit talk about language, that is, metalinguistic or metapragmatic *discourse*, and in the regimentation of language use through more implicit metapragmatics" (Woolard 1998:9, emphasis in original), the common thread being that language ideologies are always tied to speakers' conscious or subconscious perceptions of social structure and their individual and collective sense of place in the material world.

Thus, as numerous studies in linguistic anthropology have convincingly demonstrated, language ideologies, whether made explicit in metalinguistic discourse or implied through discursive practice, are never simply and transparently about language. Rather, as Woolard and Schieffelin argue, language ideologies "envision and enact links of language to group and personal identity, to aesthetics, to morality, and to epistemology" and "[t]hrough such linkages, they often underpin social institutions" (1994:56). In a similar vein, Debra Spitulnik's investigation of the ways in which Zambian national radio mediates both national unity and diversity through the allocation of airtime to the country's diverse languages in accordance with varying perceptions of their political and economic value, likewise leads her to conclude that "[l]anguage ideologies are, among many other things, about the construction and legitimation of power, the production of social relations of sameness and difference, and the creation of cultural stereotypes about types of speakers and social groups" (1998:164).

The observation that language ideologies underpin, and hence are implicated in the production and reproduction of social structure and social institutions rests on an explicit recognition that language is inherently multifunctional, both indexical and constitutive of the social world (Irvine 1989). As Silverstein argues, "people not only speak about, or refer to, the world 'out there'--outside of language--they also presuppose (or reflect) and create (or fashion) a good deal of social reality by the very activity of using language" (1979:194). Expanding on this notion of the multifunctionality of language to address the relations of power and interest implicated in linguistic praxis, Blommaert argues that "discourse is in itself…a crucial symbolic resource onto which

people project their interests, around which they can construct alliances, on and through which they exercise power. Power (including the (re)production of ideology) must be identified as a form of practice, historically contingent and socially embedded" (1999:7).

In this sense, scholarship in language ideology owes much to French sociologist and social theorist Pierre Bourdieu's articulation of a comprehensive conceptual framework for deconstructing the symbolic power of language and the political economy of linguistic exchanges. Bourdieu's central argument, first articulated in a 1977 article, is that linguistic practices constitute a form of social capital which may be exchanged for political, social, and economic capital within a local or national economy. Such exchanges, Bourdieu contends, are regulated by the state insofar as the value accorded linguistic practices relies on external legitimation, which is primarily accomplished through state level institutions, particularly those associated with education. Such institutions produce "a foundation of shared belief" (Thompson in Bourdieu 1991:23) which comprises the mechanism by which symbolic power may be misrecognized and therefore legitimized by those subjected to it and hence constitutes the basis for symbolic as opposed to coercive power.

Of even greater relevance to a language ideology approach is Bourdieu's foundational work on the subject (1991) that provides a means for exploring ways in which institutional interactions are implicated in the production and reproduction of broader social inequalities through linguistic legitimation. In explicating the central premise behind his "economic" model of linguistic exchange, Bourdieu argues that "relations of communication par excellence--linguistic exchanges--are also relations of

symbolic power in which the power relations between speakers or their respective groups are actualized" (1991:37). In other words, linguistic practices--i.e., the appropriate use of the various styles, registers, and varieties of language that characterize the speech economy of a community--constitute symbolic capital which may be traded in for political authority, social flexibility, and economic power. In this sense, it is the ability of linguistic practices to provide access to material resources which constitutes their value on the linguistic market. Thus, for example, in a study of the comparative economy of praise-oratory among a caste of *griots* (bards) in a Wolof community in rural Senegal who derive income from their facility in the verbal arts, Irvine argues that "verbal skills and performances are among the resources and activities forming a socioeconomic system; and the relevant knowledge, talents, and use-rights are not evenly, randomly, or fortuitously distributed in a community…. The fact of uneven distribution is itself economically relevant" (1989:255).

The ability of linguistic practices to provide access to material resources depends, in turn, on these practices having been legitimated by a recognized, often state-sponsored, institutional authority. Thus, in Irvine's study, the relevant institutional authority is the political system itself, in that the ability to gain and retain high office is dependent on facility in the verbal arts which must be performed on the behalf of high-ranking officials by *griots*, as participation in such practices is considered incompatible with a politician's social stature. While Bourdieu's concept of institution includes formal political, religious, economic, and, most importantly, educational organizations, he also argues that "[a]n institution is not necessarily a particular organization...but is any relatively durable

set of social relations which endows individuals with power, status and resources of various kinds. It is the institution, in this sense, that endows the speaker with the authority to carry out the act which his or her utterance claims to perform" (Thompson 1991:8). Furthermore, building on his earlier theory of practice (1977), Bourdieu argues that institutions, like all social relations, are emergent in interaction, insofar as they are reproduced through the processes of daily social interaction, including linguistic practices, of their members and/or participants, thereby rendering the dominated complicit in their domination.

Over time, Bourdieu's theory has come under criticism from scholars who have suggested that it overstates the role of social institutions in legitimizing linguistic practices, thereby downplaying human agency and circumscribing the possibility of contestation of institutional authority (e.g., Gal 1989, Irvine 1989). Furthermore, studies in the political economy of language contact, such as Woolard's (1989a) study of bilingualism and the politics of subnational ethnic identity in Spanish Catalonia and Jaffe's (1999a) study of diglossia and the politics of indigenous ethnic identity on the island of French Corsica, have called into question whether the linguistic marketplace Bourdieu posits is able to achieve integration to such a degree that its underlying assumptions become hegemonic, inexorably and invariably compelling those members of a society who are unable to claim facility in the officially sanctioned linguistic variety to regard its dominan(ce/ation) as legitimate.

Such critiques of Bourdieu's concept of the "linguistic marketplace" as overly deterministic in allowing little possibility for the emergence of language ideologies not in

keeping with the "foundation of shared belief" ratified by state level institutions and hence little opportunity for linguistic choice to resist or transform the system notwithstanding, the notion that structures of power are implicated in linguistic praxis is important to elaborating a clearer understanding not only of the specific ways in which language ideologies developed under the influence of broad institutionalized sociopolitical processes create a political economy of linguistic choice at the local level but also of the "precise role played by language ideologies in more general sociopolitical developments, conflicts, and struggles" (Blommaert 1999:2). As Gal writes in concluding remarks to a volume that seeks to pull together disparate avenues of scholarly endeavor under the rubric of a language ideologies approach, "[i]f the notion of 'language ideology' encourages analysis to encompass both social interaction on the one hand, and, say, state policy on the other, this is in part because it can be understood both as verbalized, thematized discussion and as the implicit understandings and unspoken assumptions embedded and reproduced in the structure of institutions and their everyday practices" (1998:319).

Language Ideological Debates

Within the burgeoning volume of literature on language ideology, of particular relevance to the present study is a volume dedicated to the study of language ideological debates, which Blommaert, in a detailed introduction, defines as "[d]ebates, that is, in which language is central as a topic, a motif, a target, and in which language ideologies

are being articulated, formed, amended, enforced" (1999:1). The study of debates is proposed as a entrée into an approach that Blommaert terms an "*historiography of language ideologies*," which, by reintroducing the historical processes by/within which the "socioculturally motivated ideas, perceptions, and expectations of language, manifested in all sorts of language use and themselves objects of discursive elaboration in metapragmatic discourse" (1999:1) emerged and developed, provides the rich ethnographic context, that Blommaert finds generally lacking, for better understanding and situating contemporary manifestations of language ideologies.

In advocating an historiographical approach to the study of language ideologies, Blommaert thus explicitly rejects an "*idealist* approach to language related ideational phenomena" (1999:6, emphasis in original) in which language attitudes or linguistic ideologies are treated as intrinsic to speakers, or something they "just happen to have." Approaching language ideologies from the perspective of the here and now amounts to nothing less than "a dehistorization of the phenomena," Blommaert argues, which, in turn, creates analytical difficulties insofar as the power relations that obtain in speech communities, not to mention speech communities themselves, cannot be productively theorized on the "synchronic plane" alone. Drawing inspiration from Bourdieu's work in the political economy of linguistic exchanges and Heller's (1994) application of that theoretical framework in French Ontario, Blommaert argues instead for locating the study of language ideologies solidly within an investigation into linguistic praxis, in which the role played by language in creating, maintaining, negotiating, and contesting social relations is central. In essence, then, Blommaert suggests a *materialist*, view of language

ideology in which the "ethnographic eye [is attuned to] the real historical actors, their interests, their alliances, their practices, and where they come from, in relation to the discourses they produce." In such a formulation, "discourse is in itself seen as a crucial symbolic resource onto which people project their interests, around which they construct alliances, on and through which they exercise power. Power (including the (re)production of ideology) must be identified as a form of practice, historically contingent and socially embedded" (1999:7).

Orthography as Ideology and Orthographic Ideologies

The symbolic nature of orthographic systems has long been understood to derive from their provision of a conventional, if arbitrary, representation of the phonological inventory of a language. This capacity to render speech into writing has, however, largely consigned orthography to relative inattention by creating a dichotomy between the spoken and the written in which the orthographic is understood to be no more than a graphic modality of speech. This normative separation between the spoken and the written--which is also reflected in the related dichotomies of sound/sign and signifier/signified-- finds antecedents over the course of the past two and a half centuries in the works of such linguists and social theorists as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Ferdinand de Saussure, and Claude Lévi-Strauss, who in their various ways each dismissed writing as a *supplement* or mere *representation* of speech. In this vein, Rousseau argued: "The analysis of thought is made through speech, and the analysis of speech through writing;

speech *represents* thought through conventional signs, and writing represents speech in the same way; thus the art of writing is nothing but a mediated *representation* of thought…" (as quoted in Derrida 1974:295).

In a celebrated deconstruction of the speech/writing complex, Jacques Derrida critiques Rousseau's depiction of writing as "a *supplement* of speech," arguing: "The movement of supplementary representation approaches the origin as it distances itself from it. Total alienation is the total reappropriation of self-presence. Alphabetic writing, representing a representer, supplement of a supplement, increases the *power* of representation. In losing a little more presence, it restores it a little bit better" (1974:295). By thus reformulating the relationship between thought, speech, and writing, Derrida paves the way for an approach to orthography that recognizes its unique capacity, as a signifier thrice removed from the signified, to concisely, but powerfully, index sociopolitical constructs.

With the long-accepted subordinated relationship of writing to speech thus problematized, scholarship in linguistic anthropology and other language-focused fields has increasingly turned to the problematic of written communication. Beginning with Basso's 1974 call for rescuing the study of writing systems from relative inattention by including writing "as a form of communicative activity," within an ethnography of communication approach that explores "the social and cultural factors that influence the ways written codes are actually used" (1991[1974]:426), scholarship of written modes of communication has critiqued assumptions of neutrality born of pervasive portrayals of writing as mere representation of speech and highlighted the socioculturally embedded

nature of orthography by, for example, examining the mechanisms of social, economic, and political control that surround literacy (e.g., Scollon and Scollon 1981, Street 1984 and 1993, Besnier 1991, Schieffelin 1995) and exploring the socially mediated nature of transcription (e.g., Ochs 1979, Jaffe and Walton 2000, Bucholtz 2000). Having thus turned a critical eye on formulations that privilege the spoken over the written, scholarship has increasingly focused on the symbolic power of orthography to index non-linguistic social constructs and argued that conventions of use are subject to historical, social, political, and economic contingencies (e.g., Coulmas 1990, Winer 1990, Hornberger 1995).

Furthermore, as a burgeoning new volume of work suggests, contrary to received wisdom (e.g., Lepsius 1981[1855], Pike 1947) orthography is intrinsically implicated in attitudes, beliefs, and values about language. Arguing this point in a study of the dimensions of debate over orthographic representation for Haitian *kreyòl*, Schieffelin and Doucet write: "The processes of transforming a spoken language to written form have often been viewed as scientific, arbitrary, or unproblematic. However the creation of supposedly arbitrary sound/sign (signifier/signified) relationships that constitute an orthography always involves choices based on someone's idea of what is important. This process of representing the sounds of language in written form is thus an activity deeply grounded in frameworks of value" (1998:285). In a study of the meaning of orthographic practices in British Creole, Sebba (1998) reiterates this point, taking Brian Street's (1984) seminal distinction between what he terms "autonomous" and "ideological" perspectives on literacy as a departure point in arguing that taking an "autonomous" approach to

orthography, in which orthography is portrayed as a technical solution and neutral vehicle for reducing speech to writing, likewise disguises the "ideological" considerations involved in devising writing systems.

Not only is the institutionalized belief that there is a correct way to graphically represent the sounds of spoken language, no matter how naturalized, itself ideological (Jaffe 1999a, Johnson 2005b), but when orthographic conventions enter the social life of a community they are also put to ideological purposes, acting as a means of constructing sociopolitical identities at the local, regional, national, supranational, and international levels (Winer 1990, Brown 1993, Jaffe 1996 and 1999a, Vikør 1993, Eira 1998, Bird 2000, Stebbins 2001, Johnson 2005b), and hence as a symbolic resource in negotiations over the dimensions of self and other. In defining the range of linguistic practices informed by values, beliefs, and attitudes toward language, or language ideologies, Woolard includes orthography as a symbolic medium in processes of identity formation, concluding that "[i]n countries where identity and nationhood are under negotiation, every aspect of language, including its phonological description and forms of graphic representation, can be contested" (1998:23). She goes on to argue: "This means that orthographic systems cannot be conceptualized as simply reducing speech to writing but rather are symbols that themselves carry historical, cultural, and political meanings" (1998:23).

Employing this conceptual framework to explore the ideological underpinnings of metalinguistic discourses surrounding orthographic choice within the context of competing systems of orthographic representation for Haitian *kreyòl*, Schieffelin and

Doucet note the ways in which various proposals for orthographic reform reference language attitudes toward different varieties of *kreyòl* which are revealed in metalinguistic terminology and linked to notions of the "inherent" superiority of one language variety over another. These notions are, in turn, based on perceptions of the purity, authenticity, and proximity to French of these language varieties as well as the prestige of the groups who speak them. Thus, despite a system of diglossia which officially privileges French over *kreyòl*, Schieffelin and Doucet suggest that contestation over the standardization of *kreyòl* orthography reveals complicated attitudes toward the two languages which speak to an ongoing negotiation of African/ European cultural duality, concluding that in Haiti, "orthographic debate is not purely about how to write kreyòl, i.e., how to represent graphically the sounds of kreyòl. It is about the conception of kreyòl itself as a 'language' and as an element of Haitian national identity. It is about how Haitians situate themselves through languages at the national and international levels" (1998:300).

Alexandra Jaffe's (1996 and 1999a) explorations of the first and second annual Corsican spelling contest likewise demonstrate that from the perspective of Corsican language activists, the codification of Corsican orthography has to do not simply with standardizing divergent spelling conventions, but with attempts to generate increased interest in the Corsican language itself and raise its status by demonstrating the ability of the threatened minority language to function in high-status domains generally reserved for the dominant French language (1996:816). Thus, in terms borrowed from the study of language planning, *corpus-based* concerns take on a *status-based* gloss, whereby issues

surrounding the standardization of Corsican orthography speak directly to negotiations over the respective status of the French and Corsican languages, and hence cultures, within contemporary Corsican society. Jaffe furthermore suggests the applicability of the ideological precept equating legitimacy with literacy that drives activist linguists' attempts to standardize Corsican orthography is resisted by average speakers of Corsican both explicitly, in the rejection of new Corsican road signs naming their villages, and implicitly, in contestants unconscious spelling of dictated Corsican words in accordance with regional variations in pronunciation rather than the accepted standard orthography during annual spelling contests organized by activist linguists. Jaffe therefore concludes that in their seeming preference for maintaining a strict division in the domains of language use, in which French serves the public sphere while Corsican is reserved for the private sphere, average Corsicans are likewise engaged in mapping out identity politics within contemporary Corsican society, albeit along different lines than activist linguists.

Jaffe's work thus suggests that the notion of orthography as a site for contested identities can be found not only in metalinguistic discourse about orthography but also in orthographic practice, a point which is reinforced by Sebba's study of the ideological nature of orthographic practice in the ways in which British Creole, a language with no recognized orthography, has been represented in writing. In particular, his description of the ways in which native speakers of British Creole have attempted to capture Caribbean inflection, especially in cases in which there exists no phonemic distinction that justifies a spelling divergent from English, the lexifier language, suggests that writers of Caribbean origin are deliberately enacting their sense of a distinct identity through the use of non-

conventional orthographic practices that inscribe differences between Creole culture and mainstream British culture. Sebba thus argues that "by treating orthography as a set of cultural practices rather than simply a system for 'reducing' speech to writing, we are able to account for writers' choices in terms of an implicit ideology of difference ('*Abstand*') between the creole and the lexifier" (1998:37).

METHODOLOGY: "DISLOCATED ETHNOGRAPHY" AND THE MIGRATORY ANTHROPOLOGIST

In a discussion of the ways in which a language ideology approach "allows an integrated study of social phenomena usually taken to be of different scales of analysis, and therefore too rarely discussed together in social approaches to language," Gal writes: "To the degree that the implicit assumption of a micro/macro split has determined, in practice, the researcher's choice of field site and method, a switch in focus encourages multisite and multimethod research, a trend that converges with developments in other corners of social science" (1998:318). Indeed, attending to the different "matters of scale" involved in studying the dynamics of a transnational collection of individuals engaged at the meso level in language ideological debates that defined efforts to promote linguistic, sociocultural, and geopolitical rapprochement in the post-Cold War era has necessitated certain shifts in traditional methodological approaches to ethnographic practice, particularly with relation to defining and locating the "community" involved.

First and foremost, the practice of what I'm calling "dislocated ethnography" requires a theoretical and methodological paradigm that provides a means of investigating a shifting, dislocated, and transnational collection of individuals who are nonetheless engaged in negotiating the dimensions of collective identity. By enabling an emphasis on commonalities of interest rather than proximity of location, the notion of a "community of practice" (Lave and Wenger 1991, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992, Wenger 1993) does just that. Where the term "community," with its traditional connotations of long-standing interactive co-locatedness, fails to adequately characterize a group marked by its extreme dislocatedness and perpetual transience and hence lacking in everyday face-to-face interaction, the notion of "community of practice" in the sense of an "aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in an endeavor" which differs "from the traditional community primarily because it is defined simultaneously by its membership and by the practice in which that membership engages" (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992:464) offers a useful framework.

Capable of encompassing heterogeneous as well as homogeneous social groupings and conflictual as well as harmonious social relations, the notion of a community of practice avoids assuming complete homogeneity in the worldview of its members, while nonetheless allowing for the probability that they will share certain context-based understandings, arising from mutual engagement in a particular set of practices. According to Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, "[w]ays of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations--in short practices--emerge in the course of this mutual endeavor" (1992:464). While practices may emerge from "communities of

practice," however, it is likewise possible to say that communities of practice emerge "in practice." Thus, it is within the meeting halls of periodic Turkic world events as well as the digital space of the ever-available internet forum that the sustained interaction between geographically dispersed individuals, which allows for the development of shared values, beliefs, and norms around which the Turkic world community of practice coalesces, is found.

But the question remains, just how does the ethnographer gain access to this community of practice? Just as the collapse of the Soviet Union and emergence of a new global order offered the opportunity for the Turkic peoples to cross established national borders in aid of supranational rapprochement, contemporaneous changes in the technological environment of the post-Cold War era forever altered the vistas in which communication takes place, allowing for the possibility that dislocated, transnational, or otherwise translocational, communities might form without heed for the complexities involved in traversing national borders or other physical boundaries. As globalization and other transnational trends thus alter the accepted dimensions of community, they simultaneously offer a challenge to such established ethnographic practices as locating fieldwork within a single site. As pioneer in the field transnational anthropology and the cultural dimensions of globalization, Arjun Appadurai suggests, in arguing that ethnographic practice must adapt to the shifts in local communities occasioned by global transformations, "[t]he terms of negotiation between imagined lives and deterritorialized worlds are complex, and they surely cannot be captured by the localizing strategies of ethnography alone" (1996:52).

Ethnographic practice involving geographically dislocated or transiently co-located communities does not, however, always preclude traditional "localizing strategies" customarily associated with ethnographic practice, such as siting fieldwork in a single location. Thus while Liisa Malkki's (1995 and 1997) work among Hutu refugees in Tanzania offers an excellent application of Appadurai's injunctive "to capture the impact of deterritorialization on the imaginative resources of lived, local experiences" (1996:52), her research was largely conducted within a refugee settlement in Mishamo, western Tanzania. Thus, while turning traditional ethnography on its head by attending to the extraordinary chain of events that occasioned the refugees' transnational displacement and defined their sense of identity and community over an examination of the ordinary routine of life in the refugee camp that would normally have constituted the organizing focus of fieldwork, Malkki's study nonetheless powerfully demonstrates that a singular fieldsite remains feasible when the ethnographic problematic resides primarily in the shared experience of a community, which, although transnationally dislocated and ostensibly transitory, is nonetheless geographically situated for the near term.

Nonetheless, the broadening horizons of dislocated anthropology also allow for innovations in methodology in keeping with the specific character of the community. In this sense, the study of highly mobile communities argues for a methodological approach that is migratory in nature, allowing the ethnographer to follow members of the community, or "community of practice," as they traverse national borders and other spatial divides/boundaries. Thus, while dislocated ethnography can be practiced from a stable base, I suggest that a more methodologically appropriate approach for investigating

communities that coalesce around shared ideology rather than coinhabit a shared communal space involves joining the translocational currents that form the loose bonds of the community, be they, in the present case, the physical affirmation of periodic gatherings or the ethereal affiliations found in internet communications, thereby enabling the ethnographer to experience in some fashion the ineffable sense of unity and community that emerges from such transient and attenuated contact.

With this in mind, I took a more mobile approach to ethnography, entering the flow of Turkic peoples and their "traveling discourses" (Gal and Kligman 2000) about the Turkic world by turning migratory. From my base in Ankara, seat of government, and hence home to the Turkish Language Society (*Türk Dil Kurumu*-TDK) and the distinguished university that played host to one of the early linguistic congresses I discuss in chapter three, I crisscrossed Turkey and into Azerbaijan attending congresses, conferences, symposia, lectures, and other Turkic world events, always as a participant and occasionally as a presenter. Alongside other attendees, I took trains and overnight buses, stayed in conference hotels and teacher's hostels, was fêted at municipal dinners and swept up in the *communitas* of cultural events, presented papers and attended lectures, gave interviews and collected "Turkic" cultural swag, and, most importantly, spent hour after hour speaking in Turkish, Azeri, Russian and even English to fellow attendees of the events who had traveled from all regions of Turkey and remote corners of the Turkic world not to mention Europe, the U.S., Australia, etc. to partake in the convivial *communitas* of these physical instantiations of Turkic unity and thereby affirm their sense of belonging to a Turkic world community imagined--to invoke and extend

Benedict Anderson's (1983) influential construct--by the community of practice that has coalesced around a determination to bring about its actualization.

Nonetheless, it is when ethnographic practice turns to internet forums, chatrooms, and news and discussion lists rather than the communal spaces and face-to-face interactions that define a traditional fieldsite, that dislocated ethnography is pushed to its extremes, given that the physical link among members of a community is sharply attenuated or disappears altogether via the internet, requiring other bases for establishing, negotiating, and maintaining commonality. It is here that the notion of a community of practice that animates this study becomes most methodologically salient, for not only did I accompany members of this dislocated Turkic world to repeated rounds of Turkic world events, but I followed many of them into the realm of cyberspace, becoming a member of several core internet news and discussion groups which not only served to advertise the Turkic world events "we" collectively attended, but also played host to ongoing negotiations over issues of Turkic language and identity and the nature of linguistic and sociocultural rapprochement among the Turkic peoples in the post-Cold War era. Indeed, it was within the bounds of a particular news and discussion group that the impromptu, but intense, language ideological debate, concerning Turkish orthography but speaking more broadly to issues of post-Soviet Turkic world relations, which forms the subject of chapter six, was enacted.

Recalling Gal's observation that attending to different "matters of scale" requires not only a move toward multi-sited ethnography, but also other shifts in method, I also derived inspiration from an assessment of ethnographic methodology by Akhil Gupta and

James Ferguson who, while writing in a similar vein, offer a slightly different take on reconceiving the siting of ethnography, arguing that the notion of ethnographic location which has always been central to fieldwork should be construed not as spatial sites, but as political locations, not as points on a compass, but as "sites constructed in fields of unequal power relations" (1997:35). Such a reconfiguration of ethnographic "location," they suggest, necessitates methodological innovations that enable ethnography "to become recognizable as a flexible and opportunistic strategy for diversifying and making more complex our understanding of various places, people, and predicaments through an attentiveness to the different forms of knowledge available from different social and political locations" (1997:37). Noting that ethnographic practice is increasingly being retheorized along such lines, Gupta and Ferguson nonetheless argue that "the institutionalized disciplinary framework of reception and evaluation too often continues to see 'experiential,' field-based knowledge as the privileged core of an ethnographic work that is then "fleshed out" with supplementary material" (1997:37).

Drawing on such reconceptualized notions of ethnographic practice, my methodological approach to the study of the Turkic world community of practice engaged in negotiating the terms of linguistic rapprochement among the Turkic peoples in the post-Cold War era turns the traditional disciplinary paradigm, as described by Gupta and Ferguson, upside down by focusing on what might once have been considered "supplementary material," namely a variety of textual records pertaining to several particularly salient "moments" in the negotiation of Turkic linguistic rapprochement, which I proceed to unpack and "flesh out" with experiential knowledge gained from

sustained participant observation within the community of practice involved both in the production of the texts associated with these particular "moments" and also in continuing efforts to promote linguistic, sociocultural, and geopolitical rapprochement within the Turkic world. It is, however, important to note that in decentering "experiential knowledge," I do not seek to thereby privilege "supplementary material," but merely to suggest that the two sources of knowledge are mutually constitutive of any given culturally-situated phenomenon and that it is therefore equally possible to use the latter, as it is the former, as an entrée to developing a rich and nuanced understanding of the ethnographic problematic.

In shifting central focus from ethnographic observation to analysis of textual records produced in the course of language ideological debates, it is furthermore important to note, following Blommaert, that not only are such debates prolific producers of language-related texts, but also that these texts are not static and discrete, but rather fluid and dynamic, entering the social fabric and intellectual life of the community in which they are enacted. In this regard, Blommaert writes:

> [Debates] are textual/discursive, they produce discourses and metadiscourses, and they result in a battery of texts that can be borrowed, quoted, echoed, vulgarized, etc. In sum, they are moments of textual formation and transformation, in which minority views can be transformed into majority views and vice versa, in which group-specific discourses can be incorporated into a master text, in which a variety of discursive means are mobilized and deployed (styles, genres, arguments, claims to authority), and in which sociopolitical alliances are shaped or altered in discourse (1998:10)

In this sense, the discursive texts produced both in and around language ideological debates bear examination not only as socially-embedded artifacts in their own right, but also as dynamic contributions to contemporaneous sociocultural relations and enduring sociopolitical processes. In examining such discourses and texts, I therefore take an explicitly ethnographic and, again following Blommaert, historiographical analytical approach whereby the links between discursive texts at the micro-level and sociopolitical processes at the macro-level are elucidated, thereby avoiding the potential pitfalls of a close textual or critical discourse analytical approach that often "seems to fall into the trap of situating power inside textual structures or discourse patterns, assuming a too self-evident stance with regard to the producers, the audience, the setting--in short, the context of the discourse (1999:34). In this sense I take Blommaert's injunction to assume an explicitly historiographical approach to the study of language ideologies--whereby not only is the *court durée*, or "real time" of everyday life that "people can see, feel, and control," but also the *durée*, or more gradual and incremental temporality that characterizes the workings of, for example, social, political, and economic systems which "are beyond the reach of individuals" accounted for--to mean attending, in the present case, not only to the *history* of the language ideological debates of the post-Cold War era Turkic world, but also their dialectical relation with the *present* and their prefiguring of the *future*. It is in this sense that an ethnographic approach, involving participant observation and thick description, becomes indispensible.

OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

Employing Turan and Turan's (1998) paradigm of relations in the post-Cold War Turkic world as a framework, in the following chapters, I examine the three phases of relations they identify through the lens of the metadiscursive dynamics of four language ideological debates--one formal, two informal, and one quasi-formal--that collectively defined and were defined by the broader ambient sociopolitical milieu in which they emerged. Keeping in mind Blommaert's injunction to attend to the "intrinsic historicity" of language attitudes, values, and beliefs in which "language processes are seen as real, socioculturally and historically anchored phenomena, not epiphenomenal to reality, but co-constructive of reality" (1999:6), I begin, in chapter two, with an exploration of the ways in which the identity of the Turkic peoples--whether collectively or individually, supranationally or nationally conceived--has long been defined by and constituted through issues of language and orthography. In particular, I examine the ways in which the linguistic identity of the Turkic peoples is intertwined with the history of "pan-Turkism" and the enduring notion of an imagined Turkic world, which, by virtue of being imagined not only largely *in absentia* but also at the supranational level, transcends the bounds of even Anderson's (1983) evocative concept of "imagined communities." This chapter thus serves to situate the four language ideological debates that characterized the first decade of post-Soviet relations among the Turkic peoples within the broader historical and sociopolitical discourses of their emergence, allowing for a more in-depth exploration of their dimensions in subsequent chapters.

After thus providing the larger contextualization, I turn, in chapter three to the first of the post-Cold War era language ideological debates, exploring the ideological underpinnings behind formal efforts to create a common Turkic orthography and *lingua franca* which emerged in the metadiscursive interplay among Turkish and Turkic scholars and language professionals during a series of three international Turkic linguistic congresses convened in Turkey between September 1990 and May 1992. While the early linguistic congresses were conceived and convened during the initial, euphoric, phase of post-Soviet relations among the Turkic peoples and were thus organized around many of the ostensibly shared ideological precepts that characterized the overarching outlook of the time, I nonetheless suggest that the ideological conflicts which emerged in the course of these instances of first linguistic contact contributed to an emergent understanding not only of the complexities of linguistic rapprochement among the Turkic peoples, but also of the social and political sensitivities that attended broader efforts at promoting solidarity within the Turkic world.

In chapter four, I explore the ways in which this emergent sense of the ambient sensitivities and constraints in Turkic world relations, in turn, sparked a second, far more informal and diffuse, language ideological debate that in speaking more openly to issues of language and identity in the post-Cold War Turkic world, contributed to sobering even state-level actors, thereby generating the more rational and pragmatic assessments of the possibilities for cooperative endeavor that characterized the second phase of relations among the Turkic peoples. It is here, I suggest, that the capacity of language ideologies

to not only reflect aspects of the material world, but also participate in its constitution is most visible.

Chapter five, in turn, centers around an exploration of contemporaneous innovations in orthographic practice within the Turkish Republic which, in paralleling and thus expanding on decades of linguistic resistance to state-sponsored efforts to purify and preserve the Turkish language, constitute, I argue, a second diffuse language ideological debate over the politics of identity in the post-Cold War era. While concurrent with the diffuse language ideological debate over the dimensions of pan-Turkic identity and affiliation described in chapter four, what distinguishes this debate is not only that it emerged in praxis rather than metadiscursively, but also that, despite speaking to broader issues of post-Cold War identity politics and thus necessarily intersecting with ongoing negotiations over the dimension of Turkic world relations, it was constrained, in province, to Turkish identity politics and the struggle over the Turkish alphabet.

In chapter six, I turn my attention to the virtual vistas of cyberspace, in particular to those internet forums and news and discussion groups within which members of the community of practice that played an instrumental role in keeping alive the notion of a broader Turkic world coalesced around discussion of issues of Turkic language, culture, and identity in aid of further negotiating the dimensions of the imagined Turkic world they were determined to see actualized. Here I explore the dynamics of a fourth, quasi-formal yet impromptu, language ideological debate that, in concentrating solely on issues concerning Turkish orthography, which nonetheless proved to be entwined in interesting

and contradictory ways with the pan-Turkic *ortak alfabe*, spoke to the sense of disillusionment and pragmatism that characterized the third phase of Turkic world relations. In this sense, I suggest that it within this final language ideological debate that emergent understandings of relations within the Turkic world in the post-Cold War era formed during preceding language ideological debates become manifest.

Chapter seven offers some final insights and conclusions with an eye to explicating the ways in which the study of a series of language ideological debates exploring the dynamics of linguistic rapprochement among the Turkic peoples serves to elucidate the broader dimensions of identity-making in the post-Cold War Turkic world and hence contributes to wider theoretical discourses concerning identity politics in the aftermath of transformative shifts in the local, national, or global order.

Chapter Two: Imagining the Turkic World Through Language and Orthography: Supranationalism, Pan-Turkism and Turkic Nationalisms

Bir ben varım,	There is just me,
Benimle birlikte Türkçem,	Along with me is my Turkish.
Türkçemle birlikte bir ben varım.	It's just me and my Turkish
Ne başında ne sonunda gelir uygar dillerin.	Neither at the fore nor lagging behind civilized tongues.
Azeri'den tut, Balkanlara çık	Begin with Azeri and proceed to the Balkans
O Türkçem benim, ben o Türkçenin.	That is the Turkish of mine, I belong to that Turkish.
Bir ulusum var,	I have just one nation,
Ulusumla birlikte Türkçem,	Along with my nation is my Turkish.
Türkçemle birlikte bir ulusum var.	It's just my Turkish and my nation
Ne başında ne sonunda gelir uygar ulusların.	Neither at the fore nor lagging behind civilized nations.
Orta Asya'dan tut, Orta Anadolu'ya çık	Begin with Central Asia and proceed to Central Anatolia
O ulus benim, ben o ulusun.	That is the nation of mine, I belong to that nation.
Ben bir varım,	There's just me,
Benimle birlikte Türkçem,	Along with me is my Turkish.
Türkçemle birlikte bir ulusum var.	It's just my Turkish and my nation
Ne başında ne sonunda gelir uygar dil ve uluslarin.	Neither at the fore nor lagging behind civilized tongues or nations.
Türkçem başlar Azeri'den Balkanlara,	My Turkish begins with Azeri and proceeds to the Balkans
Ulusum Orta Asya'dan Anadolu'ya çıkar.	My nation stretches from Central Asia to Anatolia.

Nusret Dişo Ülke[4]

But the homeland is partly invented, existing only in the imagination of the deterritorialized groups, and it can sometimes become so fantastic and one-sided that it provides fuel for new ethnic conflicts.

Arjun Appadurai
Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization, 1996, p.49

INTRODUCTION

Efforts aimed at uniting the Turkic peoples in the post-Soviet era rely heavily, whether consciously or unconsciously, on perceptions of the "Turkic world" as a

[4] As quoted in Ercilasun (1996 [1977]:100), translated by Güneli Gün.

cohesive entity. While this notion of cohesiveness is the touchstone to which the participants to this endeavor continually return as they negotiate the pragmatic terms of contemporary Turkic rapprochement, the ways in which the Turkic world is conceived have nonetheless proved both diverse and negotiable. As such, this chapter seeks to offer a nuanced understanding of the dimensions of the Turkic world by exploring the historical emergence of notions of pan-Turkic unity which formed the basis for early conceptualizations of this supranational collective. Moreover, since the notion of pan-Turkic unity has, since its inception, competed first with clan-based or proto-national identity constructs and, more recently, with fully articulated, if nascent, national constructions of identity, even as pan-Turkism has been depicted as an expansion or extension of such local identities, I also examine the historical dimensions of national identity formation in the Turkic world.

In exploring the emergence of pan-Turkism and nationalism in the Turkic world, I focus, in particular, on the ways in which these two ideological poles, between which identity politics in the post-Soviet Turkic world alternate, have largely coalesced around issues of language and orthography. Although it is not ground-breaking, given the pervasive hegemony of a perceived metonymic link between language and nation, to suggest that the Turkic nations have been largely conceived by and through language, I nonetheless extend this paradigm to suggest that the putative Turkic world itself, not unlike its individual constituent parts, has also largely been constituted in linguistic terms. In this sense, I would suggest that the Turkic world, both historically and in present times, has been conceived of, or, to borrow Benedict Anderson's (1983)

influential notion, *imagined* as a broad language community. Thus, while it is beyond the scope of this article to offer a full treatment of the intersecting histories of pan-Turkism and nationalism, since present manifestations of these ideologies find their roots in historical antecedents, a brief overview of their development, particularly as relates to linguistic issues, will serve to contextualize present-day discourses of rapprochement among the Turkic peoples.

In suggesting that an elucidation of the historical parameters by which the Turkic world has been conceived through language will allow for a deeper understanding of the dynamics inherent to contemporary supranationalist efforts at linguistic, sociocultural, and geopolitical rapprochement among the Turkic peoples, I follow Blommaert who, in developing his case for a historiography of language ideologies, in which language is seen as a "material thing" that is manufactured and manipulated by interested parties, points to the inherent dialogism between the "real" time of the *court durée* and the "historic" time of the *durée*, as mentioned briefly in his introductory chapter to a volume devoted to exploring language ideological debates. He writes:

> The patterns in which [linguistic] interventions occur are discontinuous: there are crucial moments in history during which languages become targets of political, social, and cultural intervention, and there are moments in which very little in the way of drama and crisis seems to happen. There are slow movements and rapid movements, period of intense activity and period of flow, periods of production, of establishment, of consolidation, of challenge, and of decay. In short, the historical patterns in which the emergence and development of ideologically framed concepts of language and language usage occur are broken, fragmented, and multilayered, for every moment of intense struggle and debate is intertextual

> with and develops against the background of previous developments over a longer span of time" (1999:425-6).

This chapter, then, is an attempt to account for the historical "background of previous developments" that contextualize those "crucial moments" within the contemporary Turkic world when language has once again become a target for sociopolitical intervention. Furthermore, given that the language ideological debates which are addressed in subsequent chapters largely revolve around issues of language planning and policy, whether overt or covert (Schiffman 1998a), Blommaert's injunction to attend to "the historical production and reproduction of language ideologies" (1999:2) also intersects nicely with Harold Schiffman's suggestion that attempts to manage the linguistic life of a community through language policy and planning arise out of the "historical, social, cultural, educational, or religious conditions extant in a particular area" (1998a:5), and his assertion that "[i]f we are to search for explanations of why certain polities have the kinds of language policies they have, we must look more deeply into their linguistic histories, in particular those aspects of language that I have come to refer to as 'linguistic culture'" (1998a:5).

GEOGRAPHICAL CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF THE TURKIC WORLD

Although anthropological studies of borderlands (e.g., Alvarez 1995 and 1996, Donnan and Wilson 1994 and 1999) have called into question the presumed inviolability of national borders, arguing that people who inhabit the interstices between nations, and

the practices in which they engage, suggest permeability rather than containment, the geographic bounds of an imagined supranational community are arguably even less distinct than those of recognized nations, due, in large part, to the absence of an internationally recognized perimeter and the lack of a centralized state authority to, at least theoretically, enforce and reinforce it. Nonetheless, since imagined communities generally possess a corresponding, if likewise imagined, territoriality, I begin this chapter by locating the Turkic world in geographical terms.

Broadly speaking, the Turkic world has been defined as the homeland of the Turkic peoples--i.e., those lands identified in origin myth and epic as the site of Turkic ethnogenesis as well the many regions to which the Turkic peoples have since dispersed, settled, and now inhabit. From a geographic perspective, then, the Turkic world is composed of Turkey; the four independent republics of Central Asia; Azerbaijan; various parts of Siberia, the Caucasus, and the Volga region; areas of Iran and Afghanistan; regions of Moldova, Ukraine, and western China, and areas of both the Balkans and the Middle East populated by Turkish communities established during the Ottoman era. In 1880, Şemsettin Sami, noting linguistic boundaries of the Turkic world in compiling his *Kâmûs-i Türkî* dictionary, noted that "the name Turk is an appellation for an important nation extending from the shores of the Adriatic Sea to frontiers of China and the inner parts of Siberia" (as quoted in Landau 1995a:31).

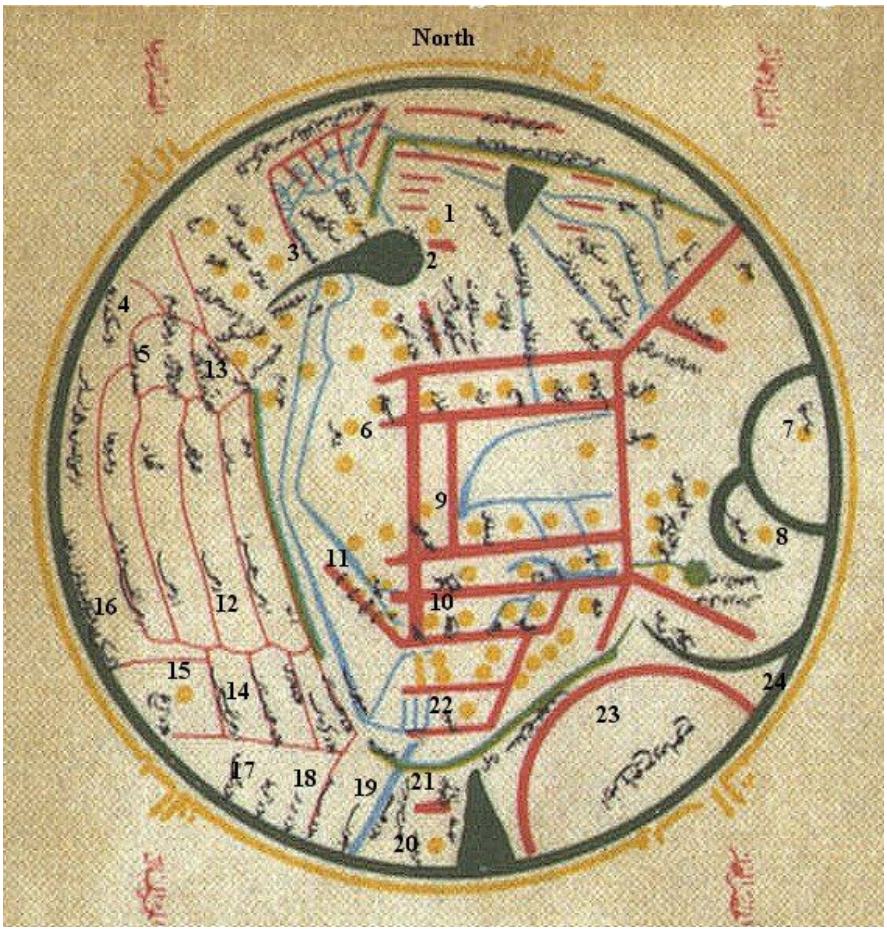

Figure 2.1 Mahmud Kashgari map of the Turkic World for *Divânü Lügati't-Türk*[5]

[5] This map was drawn by Mahmud Kashgari for inclusion in the *Divânü Lügati't-Türk* he prepared in 1072 AD for the Caliph of Baghdad. It is the first known world map of Turkish origin and centers on Turkic Central Asia, including Balasagun (9), which is located in present-day Kyrgyzstan, but depicted in Kashgarli's map as the center of the world, and Kashgar (10), Kashgari's place of birth. It was found at http://bigthink.com/ideas/21130, last accessed August 2, 2011). According to the introduction to a 1982 translation of the *Divânü Lügati't-Türk* by Turcologist Robert Dankoff, Kashgari's map indicates the location of various Turkic "dialects," suggesting the importance he placed on language in defining the Turkic tribes, which he divided into two main groups: Turks and Oghuz. Kashgarli also encouraged the non-Turkic peoples of the region to learn the language of their Turkic neighbors, writing "every man of reason must attach himself to them, or else expose himself to their falling arrows. And there is no better way to approach them than by speaking their own tongue, thereby bending their ear, and inclining their heart." This quote was found at http://www.registan.net/index.php/

Nearly a half century later, founder of the Turkish Republic Mustafa Kemal Atatürk famously described the Turkic world as occupying "a large homeland roughly to the west of Asia and the east of Europe, separated by the boundaries of land and sea and known throughout the world…as 'Türkeli'" (as quoted in Turgut 2001:21). Another six decades later, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the geographic parameters of the Turkic world as described in detail by then-President Suleyman Demirel remain roughly the same:

> The borders of [the Turks'] historical fatherland begin to the north of the Black Sea. The Ural mountains, the Volga and Ural rivers, the Caucasus mountains, the vast steppes of Asia, the Caspian Sea and plains that surround it are all found within this region. Along with the majestic Aral Sea, the Amu Darya and Syr Darya rivers that flow into the fatherland are the great sources of water that sustain it. The Altay and Tanri mountains of legend likewise lie within this region. This immense geography stretching to Siberia in the north, the Great Wall of China in the east, and the Himalayas in the south, encompasses exactly 3.9 million square kilometers. These famous mountains, rivers and plains which constitute the recognized features of every world geography are fixtures of the Turks' fatherland (as quoted in Turgut 2001:19, translation is mine).

2007/02/28/mahmud-kashgaris-11th-c-map-of-turkic-world/, last accessed August 2, 2011.

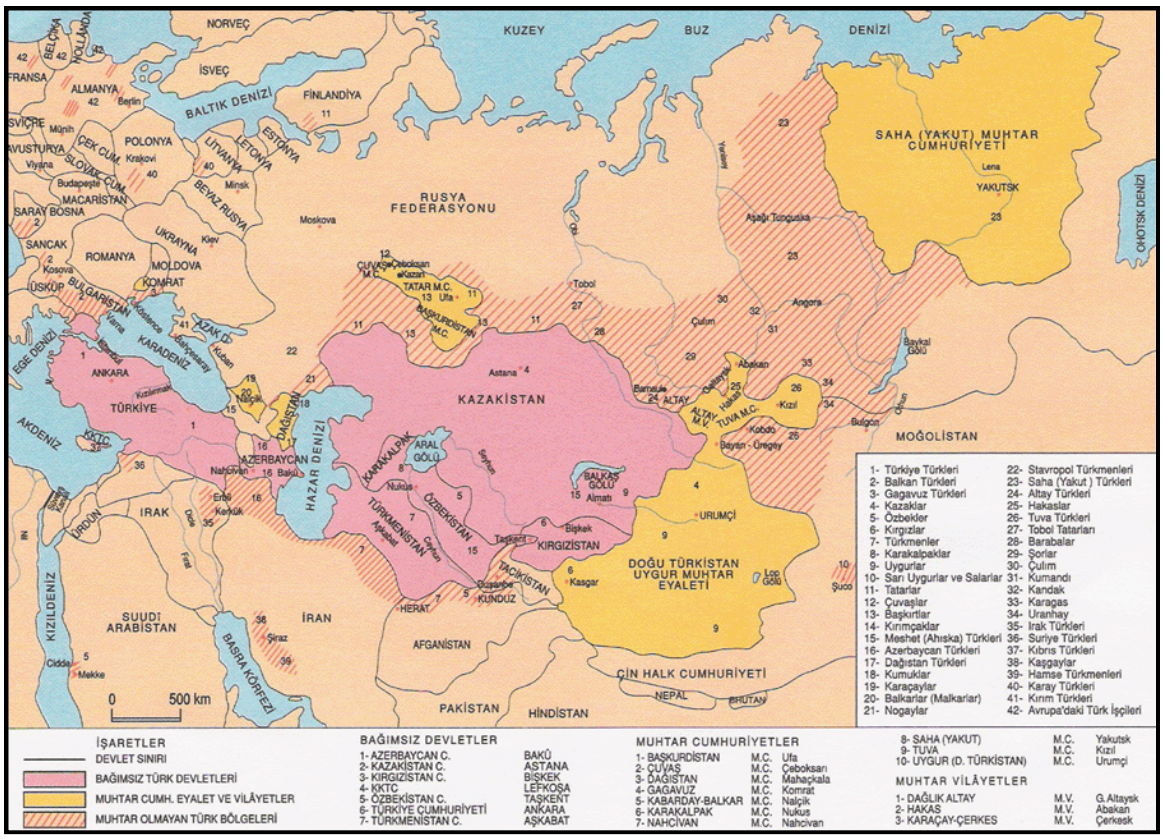

Figure 2.2 Turkish map of the Contemporary Turkic World[6]

Despite such consistency over time in definitions of the geographic parameters of the Turkic world,[7] it is, as suggested above, the human dimension, or the shared

[6] This map shows the contemporary geographical dimensions of the imagined Turkic world. Pink indicates independent Turkic nations, yellow indicates Turkic autonomous states and provinces, and yellow with pink hatching indicates non-autonomous Turkic regions. It was found at http://www.turkdunyasi.aku.edu.tr/harita.php, last accessed on August 2, 2011).

[7] I would, however, note that even the physical boundaries of the putative Turkic world have, at various junctures, been imagined quite differently. Thus, for example, to the mind of Turar Ryskulov, chairman of the Central Electoral Committee of Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic from its inception in 1918 to its dissolution in 1924, the Turkic world, under the rubric of "Turkestan" was limited to Central Asia,

sociocultural features of the inhabitants of this vast territory, that lies at the heart of conceptualizations of the Turkic world, for it is around the idea of a broad, shared identity as "Turks" that notions of the Turkic world first coalesced. In such formulations of the Turkic world, both historical and contemporary, shared language, culture, and religion take precedence over geographical territoriality as the basis for distinguishing between self and other. Thus, in excerpts from a manuscript originally prepared in the 1930s and entitled "Observations on the Future of the Turkish World,"[8] Crimean exile and well-known publicist and political writer Cafer Seyadahmet Kirimer writes: "In deliberating on the Turkish world, we have in mind those Turks professing the same religion and having homogenous language and culture." He goes on to explain the failure of the Turkic world to be realized, despite such shared attributes by oblique reference to external political intervention, arguing: "If all the Turkish people had, by their own will, been able to maintain the nationalist current that had fired them with great enthusiasm since 1905, especially in the Soviet Union, where live the majority of the peoples of

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while for Tatar Bolshevik Mirza Sultan Galiev, the Turkic world, or "Republic of Turan" stretched from Kazan to the border with China (Bennigsen 1985). The authors of both, somewhat anomalous, conceptualizations of the Turkic world, conceived in the early, and hence more tolerant, years of Bolshevik power, were later accused of being national communists, or independent Muslim leaders, and executed during extensive Stalin-era purges of former Bolsheviks (Bennigsen 1985).

[8] Hostler translates *"Türk dünyasi"* as "Turkish world," where I have chosen to translate it as "Turkic world." Although both are correct, I would argue that "Turkish world" is more suited to the time in which Kirimer was writing and "Turkic world" is more suited to contemporary times. The difference in translation arises from the fact that there exists no distinction in Turkish or related languages as there does in English (and Russian) for the adjective Turkish (*Turetskii* in Russian) and the adjective Turkic (*Turkskii* in Russian), *Türk* is used in both circumstances.

Turkish nationalism, there is no reason to doubt that unity of all these Turks would now be an actual fact" (as quoted and translated in Hostler 1993:171).

In more contemporary times, former Turkish president Suleyman Demirel, known for jauntily and repeatedly conjuring a Turkic world that stretched "from the Adriatic Sea to the Great Wall of China" ("*Adriyatik'den Çin Seddi'ne*"), was nonetheless quick to emphasize that the unity of the Turkic world resided not in a common geography but rather in shared language, culture, and beliefs. Thus, in a speech delivered during an April 1992 press conference marking the inauguration of Turkey's Avrasya[9] channel, designed to bolster sociocultural bonds within the Turkic world by introducing the Turkic peoples to traditional Turkish culture, he remarked:

> Today is a historic day for the Turkic World. Our brother countries which are spread across a wide geographic area stretching from the Adriatic to China and who have newly found themselves faced with independence are now face to face with the possibility of being a single ear, a single heart…. We [Turks] migrated to the Mediterranean region, but in heart and spirit we were always with you. Our shared language, culture, and beliefs formed (constituted) tightly bound ties between us (as quoted in Turgut 2001:50-51, translation mine).

[9] "*Avrasya*" translates as "Eurasia" and is a term that, while broadly encompassing both Europe and Asia, came to be used in place of "Turkic world" to designate the Turkic peoples due to concerns that the latter term carried unwanted pan-Turkic connotations. The Avrasya television channel was designed to acquaint the Turkic peoples with the people, geography, and cultural traditions of Turkey. It was broadcast in simplified Turkish with subtitles in the Latin alphabet to familiarize viewers with the Turkish language and orthography.

Likewise, in an address delivered at the Fifth Summit of Turkish Speaking Countries (*Beşinci Türkçe Konuşan Ülkeler Zirvesi*) in Baku, Azerbaijan in 2000, Demirel opined:

> Fundamentally, what has brought us together for the fifth time is the unity of inclination and spiritual partnership of a Turkic world composed of 200 million people spread across 11 million square kilometers. The roots of this great partnership are found in our history and our language. Indeed to seek these roots is to seek the common values that form a bridge between the past and the future and bind us to one another (as quoted in Turgut 2001:636, translation mine).

PAN-TURKISM AND THE EMERGENCE OF A NASCENT TURKIC WORLD IDENTITY

Despite such grandiloquent rhetoric of primordial affinities, the Turkic peoples have not always been conceived of as a community, imagined or not. Indeed, notions of the Turkic world as a cohesive entity did not emerge until the late nineteenth century, when a group of Turkic intellectuals seeking to foster a broad ethnolinguistic and religious, or pan-Turkic, consciousness among the Turkic peoples of imperial Russia, looked for support to the Ottoman Empire, which, deep in the throes of its own homegrown identity crisis, presented a receptive audience for such suggestions. This section explores the emergence of political and cultural pan-Turkism among the Turkic peoples, paying particular attention to the ways in which emergent notions of the "Turkic world" were constituted through language and orthography.

The Emergence of Social and Political Pan-Turkism among the Turkic Peoples

Up through the better part of the 19th century, constructions of identity among the Turkic peoples scattered across the then Russian empire tended to be localized and compartmentalized. Although commonalities of language, culture, and religion existed amongst these diverse Turkic peoples and were recognized by their respective intelligentsia, such commonalities were not generally conceived of in a systematic manner nor understood to contribute to a broader shared identity (e.g., Hostler 1993, Fierman 1991a). Beginning in the late nineteenth century, however, prominent intellectuals among the Turkic peoples living within the territories of what was then czarist Russia, and hence subject to the pressures of pan-Slavism and its attendant policies of christianization and russification, responded by formulating a counterbalancing focus on local ethnic and religious identity which ultimately developed into the entwined ideologies of pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism respectively (e.g., Benningsen 1985, Hostler 1993, Landau 1995a).[10] Pan-Islamism was already a familiar concept in the Ottoman Empire, where Sultan Abdul Hamid II had long sought to impose the primacy of Islam as the basis for common identity. Pan-Turkism, however, was a more novel concept, depending on the development, first among the intelligentsia and then the masses, of a sense of ethnic affinity centered around common language, culture,

[10] Although it is beyond the scope of this study to address, historians of this era have noted that while some prominent pan-Turkists (e.g. Ismail Gaspirali) took a staunchly secularist stand, for many, Islam was accepted as an important aspect of pan-Turkic identity and conflicts between pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism were minimal (Bennigsen 1985, Hostler 1993, Landau 1995).

and religion. Despite the challenges, Turkic *jadidists* (reformers), recognizing that fragmentation and socioeconomic backwardness among the Turkic peoples of the Russian empire rendered them vulnerable to Russian hegemony and its assimilationist forces, undertook an ambitious program of reform as a matter of cultural survival.

While pan-Turkist ideology was developing in Russian lands, the foundations of pan-Turkism were simultaneously being laid within the Ottoman Empire where Ottomanism had long defined the politics of identity and the moniker 'Turk' had hitherto been regarded as a derogatory term, nearly synonymous with an uneducated country bumpkin. Renowned scholar of pan-Turkism Jacob Landau (1995a) describes how, at the end of the nineteenth century, Ottoman scholars, under no small influence from European orientalists, began to develop an appreciation for the historical achievements, language, and literature of their Turkic predecessors. The primary effect of this new-found enthusiasm for Turcology was to raise interest in Turkishness, thus laying the foundation for the later development of Turkism--a revolutionary shift in identity politics within the Ottoman Empire which replaced traditional identification as an Ottoman or Muslim with a sense of Turkish nationalism (Bennigsen 1985, Hostler 1993, Landau 1995a).

This incipient sense of national pride, based on an appreciation for the cultural legacy bequeathed them by their Turkic predecessors, also paved the way for increasing interest in the modern descendants of the shared Turkic ancestor--the so-called *dış Türkler* (outside Turks)--and hence the eventual development of pan-Turkist ideology

among the Ottoman Turks (Landau 1995a, Hostler 1993).[11] It wasn't until the early twentieth century, however, that pan-Turkist ideology gained traction in the Ottoman Empire through a confluence of events including the ascendancy of Turkish nationalism after the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 and the influx of Turkic intellectual émigrés from Russia following the First Russian Revolution and subsequent repression of liberalism. In the ensuing years, influential intellectuals such as Ziya Gökalp, Yusuf Akçura, Ali Hüseyinzade, and Ahmet Ağaoğlu wrote articles, poems, and pamphlets appealing to nationalist sentiment among the Turkic peoples of both Ottoman and Russian lands by emphasizing their common cultural and linguistic heritage (Hostler 1993, Landau 1995a, Arai 1992). Of pan-Turkism, Landau writes: "In its heyday, the guiding objective of this movement [was] to strive for some sort of union--cultural, physical, or both--among all peoples of proven or alleged Turkic origins, whether living… within [or] without the frontiers of the Ottoman Empire" (1995a:1).

In describing the desired union as either "cultural, physical, or both" Landau points to an important distinction in the taxonomy of pan-ideologies, in general, and pan-Turkism, in particular, between those that are cultural and those that are political by nature (1988:2). Political pan-Turkism, Landau suggests, is defined by a desire for physical union among kindred peoples. In Turkey, political pan-Turkism found

[11] Due to the shared root of their emergence in Ottoman Turkey, numerous scholars (e.g., Landau 1995, Hostler 1993) have noted that the distinction between Turkism and pan-Turkism was frequently not apparent and that the two terms were often used synonymously. This continues to be the case in reference to relations between the Turkish and Turkic peoples in the post-Soviet era, when the term pan-Turkism, carrying perceived racist overtones, is eschewed in favor of Turkism, which invokes a more benign association with Kemalist nationalism (Tchervonnaia 2002).

expression in a focus on irredentism, which Landau defines as: "an ideological or organizational expression of passionate interest in the welfare of an ethnic minority living outside the boundaries of the state peopled by that same group" (1995a:1). Landau goes on to distinguish between moderate and extreme strains of political pan-Turkist thought, noting that "[m]oderate irredentism expresses a desire to defend the kindred group from discrimination or assimilation, while a more extreme manifestation aims at annexing the territories which the group inhabits" (1995a:1).

Political pan-Turkism reached its zenith in the Ottoman Empire during its dying days, when a collection of ideologues, beleaguered by the threat posed by the separatist ambitions of emergent nationalist movements among the non-Turkish minorities, came to believe that rapprochement with the Turkic peoples and annexation of their lands offered the promise of restored empire. Among the Turkic peoples of Russia, political pan-Turkist thought reached its height at roughly the same time, when in the wake of the overthrow of czarist regime in the February Revolution of 1917, notions of possible independence gained currency (Landau 1995a). Although such notions revolved around uniting the Turkic peoples of Russia, there was nonetheless the general sense that closer relations, and perhaps union, with Turkey would serve to better ensure their sovereignty. Hostler notes: "It was clear to the Turko Tatar leaders that the united efforts of the Turks of Russia were not strong enough to achieve their national aims. Without help from abroad, it was impossible to liberate themselves from Russian domination or to unite with their conationals abroad. The only foreign state that was in a position to help was Ottoman Turkey" (1993:109). Such pragmatic considerations were further reinforced by

a romanticized sense of affinity with Ottoman Turks. Hostler writes: "In the opinion of the far-off Turko-Tatar peoples in Russia, [the Turkish sultan] was the only independent and powerful ruler among the Turks. This natural attractiveness of Istanbul as a center of the Islamic and Turkish world… tinted the eastern Turks with Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkish concepts" (1993:94). The dual sense of pragmatism and romanticism of this era strongly foretells similar considerations in the post-Soviet era.

The Role of Language in the Development of Pan-Turkism

While political pan-Turkism embraced irredentism, cultural pan-Turkism, on the other hand, eschewed such ambitions, seeking cultural union rather than territorial unification of the Turkic peoples. In its focus on cultural rapprochement, this strain of pan-Turkism ultimately coalesced in important ways around language both as a marker of shared cultural identity and a means for discovering and expressing it. Since efforts at Turkic rapprochement in the contemporary era have tended to emphasize cultural solidarity rather than political or territorial union and have thus centered around issues of linguistic unity, the remainder of this section will address the specific role played by language in the history of pan-Turkism, focusing on earlier attempts at linguistic unification among the Turkic peoples and their contribution to the creation of a cohesive Turkic identity. Such previous language planning initiatives serve to contextualize modern-day discourses at both a conscious and unconscious level and are referenced by direct participants as well as the general populace, thus providing the backdrop for

contemporary notions of the Turkic world, efforts at Turkic rapprochement, and attempts at linguistic unification among the Turkic peoples.

According to Landau, pan-Turkism's focus on language was a natural outgrowth of the recognition that "since Turkic groups were not contiguous geographically, some other element should be selected and developed to bring them closer to one another" (1995a:9). He notes:

> The linguistic element was obviously the first choice, as languages were similar, though not identical, among these groups, and intellectuals could communicate in a sort of 'High Turkish'. The main difficulty in this respect was that vernaculars often varied markedly, and literacy rates were very low. Not unexpectedly, increasing literacy and the creation of a common language for cultural rapprochement became the order of the day as a first step towards union. (1995a:9)

Crimean Tatar intellectuals and reformers were instrumental in the emergence of pan-Turkism in the mid-nineteenth century, but none played a role more important to its development than a man by the name of Ismail Bey Gaspirali, also known by his Russified surname, Gasprinsky. Gaspirali's combined focus on language and education, both formal and informal, formed the basis for the development of pan-Turkist ideology in the Russian lands. In 1883, arguing that "[f]or the revival of a great people, who have long remained in ignorance, the press will play a crucial role" (Lazzerini 1992), Gaspirali began publishing a news journal under the bilingual title *Perevodchick/Tercüman,* meaning interpreter in Russian and Turkish respectively. The journal was issued weekly

in a dual language format with two pages dedicated to Russian and two to a Turkic *lingua franca* of his own design.

Although not the first journal to cater to the Turkic peoples (c.f., Akiner 1990), *Tercüman* was to become the longest running and most influential. Codifying his overarching pan-Turkist agenda under the banner: "Unity in language, thought, and action," (*Dilde, fikirde, işte birlik*), Gaspirali sought to remedy manifest barriers to communication resulting from linguistic differentiation among the various Turkic languages, with the ultimate aim of effecting the cultural unity of the Turkic peoples residing in Russian lands. According to Landau, "Gasprinsky's *usul-i cedid* curriculum reform and journal *Tercüman* both advocated a common language as a top-priority means of rapprochement (implying subsequent union) among all Turkic people" (1995a:10). The emphasis Gaspirali placed on language as the core feature common to the Turkic peoples, and thus the key to unifying them, was instrumental in the development of pan-Turkist ideology.

Despite the Russian state's suspicion of pan-Turkist activities, Gasprali managed to avoid attracting unwanted scrutiny by focusing on the linguistic aspects of rapprochement among the Turkic peoples, and eschewing overt politics. Within the pages of *Tercüman*, Gaspirali sought to develop a language that could be understood by "the boatman of the Bosphorus and by the camel driver of Kashgar" (Bennigsen 1985, Hoster 1993). Describing the process of linguistic reform and *lingua franca* that resulted, Landau writes:

> As dialect differences consisted chiefly of vocabulary variation, a special effort was made to 'purify' the language of foreign words, such as those of Russian, Arabic, or Persian origins--which presumably were employed in only a part of the Turkic languages--and substitute for them others of Turkish or Turkic origin as used in the Ottoman Empire, also the object of linguistic reform. A parallel effort (apparently less successful) was directed at minimising phonological diversity. The result was a language somewhere between Ottoman Turkish and Tatar, reasonably comprehensible to both groups and to others as well. This hybrid, called 'the Common Language' (*Lisan-ı umumî*) was one of the factors contributing to the success of *Tercüman*, which reached not only Southern Russia, but also Central Asia and Eastern Turkestan…." (1995a:10)

Despite Gaspirali's deference to Russian power and attendant circumspection in overtly addressing topics of a political nature, the political implications of *Tercüman*'s progressive social agenda cannot be overlooked, particularly its direct contributions to the development of a program of social reform and civil rights for the Turkic peoples. According to Lazzerini, *Tercüman* "set the stage for a broader and more tolerant entertainment of ideas: about reforming the traditional educational system, about simplifying the Arabic script and overcoming distinctions among Turkic languages, about the importance of studying foreign languages as passages to other cultures and their achievements, about developing skills (particularly economic ones) and unleashing talents (especially in women), and about restructuring the administration of Muslim religious practices" (1992).[12] In this sense, *Tercüman*'s focus on the role of language and education, broadly defined, constituted a seminal effort in an overarching social agenda ultimately aimed at uniting and empowering the Turkic peoples.

[12] This quote was taken from an electronic document (without page numbers) found at http://www.iccrimea.org/gaspirali/clarion.htm and last accessed August 2, 2011.

Political unrest throughout Russia in the early twentieth century brought about a relative liberalization of the political milieu which resulted in an expansion of pan-Turkist activities and inaugurated the development of the next, more political, phase of pan-Turkist ideology among the Turkic peoples (Hostler 1993). In response to relaxation of the censorship under which it had previously operated, *Tercüman* eliminated its Russian-language section, which had already dwindled considerably; adopted the new name *Tercüman-i Ahval-i Zaman* (*The Interpreter of Contemporary News*); and gradually increased its publication schedule, eventually becoming a daily. Between 1904 and 1905, Gaspirali and other noted pan-Turkists became directly involved in politics, forming the *Ittifaq al-Muslimin* (the Muslim Union) political party as a means of advancing social reforms and addressing educational issues (Bennigsen 1985, Landau 1995a) Meanwhile, Gaspirali took part in numerous congresses convened by leading intellectuals among the Turkic peoples of Russia during the relatively liberal atmosphere of the time, using the opportunity to further advocate linguistic rapprochement as a means to political and cultural union among the Turkic peoples. At the Third Congress of Moslems of Russia, convened near Nidzhni-Novgorod in August 1906, Gaspirali is said to have remarked: "In the evolution of our languages, we have come to such a point that we do not understand each other. Schools must open the way for our language and for our literature. It must bring us to a common understanding" (from Mende 1936:48 as quoted in Hostler 1993:103).

In May 1917, Gaspirali's unflagging push for linguistic unification finally won formal approbation with the passage of a resolution at the first All-Russian Muslim

Congress in Moscow which was revolutionary in mandating the language of instruction in educational institutions across the Turkic world. In particular, it stipulated the use of the local Turkic language in primary and secondary schools, "common Turkic" and Russian in secondary schools, and "common literary Turkic" in institutions of higher education (Zenkovsky 1960).[13] The stage was thus set for the unification through language of a kindred peoples, many of whom had little practical knowledge of one another or the commonalities they shared, through the legitimation of a shared language promulgated through state-level institutions (Bourdieu 1991).

Within a year of the congress, however, the conditions for linguistic unification of the Turkic peoples were quite altered. The Bolshevik Revolution of October 1917 was soon followed within a year by the closure of *Tercüman*, but the era of linguistic pan-Turkism *Tercüman* helped spawn in the Russian cum Soviet lands did not come to an abrupt end with the shuttering of the journal. To the contrary, Bennigsen argues that pan-Turkist activities associated with language received "a new and unexpected impulse" in the aftermath of the October Revolution (1985:43). Although no doubt due in large part to the weakness of the nascent regime, such activities also appear to have been tolerated, even encouraged, by the Bolsheviks for some years to come by dint of their perceived usefulness in dividing the Turkic peoples from the Ottoman Empire, seen as a potential rival for their loyalties, and displacing religion, deemed antithetical to Bolshevik ideology, as the focal point of identity.

[13] For a text of the resolution see a translation by Komatsu (1994:126).

Under the influence of a cadre of Turkic intellectuals who were simultaneously devoted pan-Turkists and genuine communists, linguistic unity, particularly orthographic reform, received the benefit of official state support and assistance (Bennigsen 1985). Corroborating this point, Winner argues that although the issue of orthographic reform had been raised amongst the Turkic peoples prior to the Bolshevik revolution, "[i]n the early period study of the problem of the new alphabet was carried out solely by individual national groups, and no attempt was made to…unify and standardise the many projects conceived." He adds that it was not until after the Revolution "that the first attempt was made to discuss the question in its larger aspects and to study it in an organised fashion" (1952:138). In describing the seemingly contradictory quasi-official support for linguistic pan-Turkism provided by the Bolshevik regime, it is essential to mention the First International Turcology Congress, not only because it constitutes one of the defining moments in the history of linguistic pan-Turkism, but also because the special role it played in both native and colonial efforts aimed at linguistic rapprochement among the Turkic peoples largely prefigured the ways in which contemporary attempts at linguistic rapprochement within the Turkic world have developed in the post-Cold War era.

Pan-Turkism and the Quest for a Common Orthography

The First International Turcology Congress, also known as the Baku Turcology Congress, was convened in the Azerbaijani capital of Baku from February 26 to March 6,

1926, during the early days of Soviet ascendancy when the regime was as yet too weak to fully impose its will on its Central Asian subjects and found it expedient to abide pan-Turkic activities insofar as they coincided with the larger aims of the nascent central state in Moscow. The congress was attended by a hundred and thirty one delegates, including ninety-eight representatives from the Soviet Turkic peoples as well as Turkish, Russian, and other "foreign" Turcologists. Turkey was represented by renowned Turcologists Huseyin Zade Ali Bey, himself an émigré from Azerbaijan, and Fuat Koprulu. The issue of alphabet reform was of immediate interest to Soviet authorities who were intent on establishing the means for mass communication but were concerned that the Arabic alphabet in use among the elite of Central Asia would prove of sufficient difficulty to hinder a literacy campaign aimed at the common man. Thus, while the agenda included discussions on issues of Turkic culture and history, debates about language, and in particular the creation of a common orthography and lexicon for the Turkic languages, took center stage.

Alphabet reform had been the focus of debate for some time among certain of the Turkic peoples, particularly the Azeris who had adopted, albeit to a limited degree, a Latin-based orthography known as the *yeŋi Turq əlifbası* (new Turkish alphabet) in 1922. According to historian Bilâl Şimşir (1991), the Baku Turcology Congress was conceived of by its hosts as a forum for legitimizing the Latin-based orthographic system and encouraging its adoption among the other Turkic peoples. Participants to the congress largely endorsed the Azerbaijani perspective, presenting papers that argued the advantages of a phonetic alphabet for the Turkic languages and maintained that a Latin-

based orthography most closely adhered to the principle of phonetic orthography. Furthermore, it was argued, adopting a Latin-based alphabet would benefit the multitude of Turkic peoples, approximately ninety percent of whom were illiterate, by reducing the number of letters from 120 to 33, thereby allowing the new alphabet to be learned in 3-4 months, whereas the old alphabet had taken twice as long. The Latin alphabet was contrasted to the Arabic alphabet which was criticized as difficult to learn and unsuited to Turkic phonology (Şimşir 1991). The Latin-based *yeŋi Turq əlifbası* of Azerbaijan was particularly singled out by delegates for its inclusion of sufficient vowels to accurately represent vowel harmony and for allowing words to be separated into syllables, vowels to be stressed, and proper nouns to be distinguished by capital letters--all features said to offer distinct advantages to children learning to read and write properly.

Even the Russian delegates joined in advocating a Latin-based orthography over Cyrillic, thereby confirming that Moscow's main aim at the time was to separate the Turkic peoples from Turkey by whatever means possible. Thus, Russian Turcologist L. Zhirkov joined Azeri colleagues in praising the *yeŋi Turq əlifbası*, declaring it superior to the Arabic alphabet from every perspective, and Zhirkov's compatriot, N.F. Yakovlev, acknowledged that the Cyrillic alphabet had been tied to the politics of Russification of the czarist era, declaring the Turkic peoples' resistance to it understandable. The Turkic peoples had entered an era of renaissance, a "spring" of national culture, Zhirkov declared, and were naturally seeking a new alphabet suitable to modern technology and the printing industry. For reasons both of practicality and Turkic solidarity, he therefore judged it essential to drop the Arabic alphabet and adopt the Latin alphabet in its place.

In his concluding remarks, Russian Turcologist A.N. Samoylovic even went so far as to recommend that the different Latin-based alphabet projects pursued by the various Turkic peoples be united and developed into "a single alphabet for all Turks" (Şimşir 1991).

Despite near consensus regarding the virtues of the Latin-based alphabet, unanimity was not to be found. Particularly vociferous in objecting to the Latin script was the Kazan Tatar delegate Alimcan Şeref Bey who offered a spirited defense of the Arabic alphabet. The communiqué he presented was later published in Istanbul under the title *A Defense of Our Letters* and served as a reference for opponents of alphabet reform in Turkey, but according to Şimşir (1991), Alimcan Şeref Bey's opposition to the adoption of a Latin-based alphabet was informed by economic rather than linguistic considerations. At the time, the Kazan Tatars were at the forefront of efforts to reform the Arabic alphabet and had built a printing industry around the modified script they had devised. Were the Latin alphabet to be adopted in its stead, their investments would have been for naught and the edge they held in commercial printing would pass to the Azeris. In contrast to this historical account, my own discussions with contemporary Tatar scholars on the topic of Alimcan Şeref Bey's motives for defending the Arabic alphabet, have, however, suggested that his objection to the Latin alphabet was ideological rather than economic in nature, rooted in the belief that Islam constituted a fundamental pillar of Turkic identity and that the Turkic people's link to Islamic literature, both sacred and profane, would become attenuated and wither were the Arabic alphabet to be abandoned.

Whether this alternative view constitutes historical rehabilitation of a national figure in view of contemporary orthographic debates is hard to say, but it nonetheless

does point to the role played by identity politics in early efforts at promoting orthographic rapprochement among the Turkic peoples. In a similar sense, it is interesting to note that in advocating adoption of a Latin-based orthography, North Caucasian delegate Omer Aliev observed that the Latin script was used in Europe, America, Australia, and even in various parts of Asia, declaring that its sheer universality proved it to be a superior alphabet. Although offering a competing vision to that of Alimcan Şeref Bey, for whom Turkic identity centered around Islam and thus the Arabic alphabet, Aliev's promotion of the Latin script, likewise appears to have been based in identity politics couched in linguistic terms.

In the end, proponents of the Latin-based orthographic system prevailed, as only they could, given that, as numerous delegates indicated, the Azeris, Yakuts, and north Caucasian Turkic peoples had already adopted Latin alphabets and the Turkmen, Uzbeks, Bashkurts, and Anatolian Turks were poised to do the same. At the conclusion of the debates, delegates to the Baku Congress ratified two resolutions by an overwhelming majority with only seven delegates opposed and six abstaining. The first resolution proclaimed the cultural and historical significance of the new Latin-based orthographic system and declared its superiority to both the modified and unmodified Arabic alphabets, but nonetheless left its specific form and the details of its implementation to the discretion of the individual Turkic peoples. The second resolution applauded the adoption of the new Turkic alphabet in Azerbaijan and elsewhere and called upon Turkic leaders to investigate and learn from the Azeris' and other Turkic peoples' experience in implementing a Latin-based alphabet, so that they might ease transition to the new

orthographic system in their own countries. By thus recommending adoption of a common Latin-based orthographic system, but leaving the details of form and implementation to the individual Turkic peoples, these concluding resolutions constituted a nod to the distinctiveness of the various Turkic peoples, within a clear injunction in favor of broader Turkic consolidation--an approach which was, at least ostensibly, to inform the Turkic linguistic congresses of the early post-Soviet era

By the same token, however, because the exact dimensions of the new alphabet were not spelled out, latinization of the Turkic alphabets remained daunting and may well have foundered were it not for the establishment of the All-Union Central Committee of the Supreme Soviet charged by the Central Executive Committee of the Supreme Soviet with the task of aiding standardization and unification of the various national latinization projects among its Turkic subjects. As a result of the combined pressure exerted and assistance afforded by the central government, the Unified Turkic Alphabet (*Birləşdirilmiş Jeni Tyrk Əlifbasь*), consisting of 33 letters--four of which were borrowed from Cyrillic and the rest from Latin--was devised and adopted in each of the Central Asian republics between 1927 and 1930 (Akiner 1990, Martin 2001, Şimşir 1991, Henze 1977).

Although the Unified Turkic Alphabet was to last less than a decade, the Baku Congress nonetheless marked a watershed moment not only in the history of Turkic orthographic reform, but also in the sociocultural history of the Turkic peoples of the Soviet Union. In ideological terms, debate over "reforming" and unifying the Turkic peoples had coalesced around pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism with proponents of the

former advocating modifications of the Arabic script and proponents of the latter recommending adoption of a Latin-based script. Thus, the consensus reached at the conclusion of the Baku Congress not only spelled victory for the 'Latinists,' who, having received the approval and support of prominent academics at an international Turcology congress, were able to move forward with implementing a common alphabet among the Turkic peoples (Şimşir 1991), but also for the ideological force of pan-Turkism over pan-Islamism. Thereafter, the Turkic peoples were to be collectively defined by language as opposed to religious faith. From a sociocultural perspective, then, the congress affirmed the basic presumed affinity of the Turkic peoples and their languages and offered a symbolic, yet simultaneously pragmatic, means of furthering their actual unification under the rubric of a shared pan-Turkic identity. Moreover, for the purposes of the present analysis, a final important detail to be gleaned from accounts of the Baku Congress is the degree to which extralinguistic issues, such as regional politics and domestic economics, were implicated in attempts at orthographic unification among the Turkic peoples, thereby foreshadowing the pitfalls that would plague similar efforts sixty five years later during the early Turkic linguistic congresses of the post-Cold War era described in chapter three.

THE EMERGENCE OF NATIONALISM WITHIN THE TURKIC WORLD

Having detailed the development of pan-Turkism in Turkey and among the Turkic peoples of Central Asia and the Caucasus in pre-Cold War era, with a particular eye for

the essential constitutive role played by language and orthography, I now turn to an examination of the emergence of nationalism on both sides of the Iron Curtain, again through the lens of language and orthography, for, as noted above, pan-Turkism and nationalism constitute the two ideological poles around which language and identity politics in the post-Soviet Turkic world revolve.

Seeds of Nationalism in the Turkic Republics: The Soviet "Nationalities" Policies

While the roots of national consciousness among the Turkic peoples stretch back to the pre-revolutionary era (Hostler 1993), it wasn't until the Soviet period that the notion of nationality was fully articulated and nation-building in Central Asia was undertaken in earnest. Developed as a strategic response to the perceived threat of pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism in the region, the nation was conceived of by Soviet authorities as "a historically evolved, stable community arising on the foundation of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up, manifested in a community of culture" (Stalin 1913 as quoted in Pipes 1997[1954]:38). Despite apparent parallels with contemporaneous European notions of the nation, the specific dimensions of nationalism in Central Asia were profoundly influenced by its emergence within the framework of socialist ideology and under the constraints of central state control. Thus, the implementation of the so-called Soviet nationalities policies within Central Asia resulted in a sociohistorically specific brand of nation-building, the effects of which continue to resonate in contemporary manifestations of nationalism in post-Soviet Central

Asia. Although it is beyond the scope of this study to address in full detail the implementation of the nationalities policies among the Turkic peoples of the region (for detailed descriptions of these policies, see for example Wheeler 1964, Bennigsen and Quelquejay 1967, Conquest 1970, Allworth 1973, Rumer 1989, and Glenn 1999), there are nonetheless a few general points worth making regarding the overarching nature of these policies, as they serve to set the stage for a more detailed discussion of the key role played by linguistic and orthographic reform in Soviet nation-building and thus outline the dimensions of national consciousness in the post-Soviet era.

First, it is important to note that the nationalities policies of the Soviet state were inspired as much by *realpolitik* as by Marxist ideology and that the creation of distinct republics from those pre-revolutionary Turkic groups resident in Central Asia with the most well-defined, albeit nascent, sense of national identity was largely dictated by the perceived threat to the integrity of the Soviet state posed by supranational identification, particularly pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism (cf. Bennigsen and Quelquejay 1967, Bennigsen 1985, Glenn 1999). Although there is some debate over whether the Turkic peoples, left to their own devices, would ultimately have united under a pan-Turkist identity or the nascent sense of national identity among more developed groups would have instead brought about eventual fragmentation into individual nations, there is little doubt that Soviet authorities, working on the principle of *divide et impera*, sought to capitalize on extant differences among the Turkic peoples to separate them into discrete nations and then further distance them from one another by defining each in as distinct terms as possible so as to eliminate any possibility of their ever reorganizing under the

rubric of pan-Turkism. Moreover, as if to further guard against this possibility, the borders of the new republics were deliberately drawn in such a way as to bisect ethnic communities, thus creating national minorities within each republic which the state could exploit to foster instability should any of republics become intransigent to the directives of the central state or the need otherwise arise. Although driven largely by pragmatic considerations, however, the nationalities policies as applied to the Turkic peoples of Central Asia were also ideologically justified by a "Marxist progressivist interpretation of history which regarded nationalism as a lesser evil when compared to Pan-Islamic and pan-Turkic movements which were then evident within Central Asia" (Glenn 1999:49).

Second, it is worth noting that although the ultimate aim of the Soviet state was the construction of a new kind of society, based not on nationality, religion, or other so-called "bourgeois" affectations, but on the principle of "proletarian internationalism," the creation of nations was considered a key stage in its formation. Thus while some scholars have argued that the principle of "national in form, socialist in content" was nothing more than a ruse designed to obfuscate the assimilationist aims of the state which ultimately sought the creation of the new Soviet people (*Sovietskii narod*), others have countered that the nationalization of the union republics was a genuine objective of the Soviet state. Proponents of this view argue that although the nation-building process was to be carefully managed by central authorities and complemented by assimilationist policies that would integrate each republic into the federation, thus allowing for the eventual "merging" (*sliyanie*) of their respective proletariat, nationalization was nonetheless a process that was pursued in earnest and regarded as an important stage of a

"progressive dialectical process," the ultimate aim of which was "the advent of a new historical epoch heralding the establishment of a new community of Soviet people" (Glenn 1999:49).

Among those scholars who contend that nation-building was a genuine objective of the state, some have further suggested that the nationalities policies succeeded insofar as they fostered a sense of national consciousness that effectively supplanted extant sub-national and supranational identities deemed incongruent with socialist ideology. Others have argued that the nationalities policies nonetheless failed to produce fully articulated modern nations due in no small part to the state-imposed and overtly ideological nature of the nation-building process which ultimately delegitimized it in the eyes of the putative nationals (c. f Glenn 1999). Regardless of such scholarly disagreement, however, there can be no doubt that the nationalities policies of the Soviet state profoundly influenced the dimensions of post-Soviet nation-building in Central Asia, insofar as they created the "proto-nations" which were to claim status as independent nations in the post Soviet era (e.g., Glenn 1999, Landau and Kellner-Heinkele 2001).

Finally, given the role of the nationalities policies in creating the "proto-nations" of Central Asia, a brief examination of the actual mechanisms of this process will enable a better understanding of the specific dimensions of nationalist sentiment that has emerged within the independent Turkic republics in the post-Soviet era. Although many of the eminent scholars cited above have aptly described the nationalities policies of the Soviet state, Glenn (1999) offers a particularly useful assessment of the role played by these policies in nation-building within Central Asia, discussing, in particular, the

creation of a national classificatory grid, national modernization, and the construction of national myth-symbol complexes. Glenn begins by noting that the radical reorganization of Central Asia into five union republics closely resembled what Benedict Anderson (1983) termed "official nationalism," in his description of the European powers' relations with their colonies. By pointing to the similarity between Soviet and colonial nation-building--which despite being imposed from above ultimately proved little hindrance to the emergence of modern nations--Glenn thus seeks to resolve the debate as to whether the development of the union republics under the aegis of the Soviet nationalities policies can be classified as "proper" nation-building given the enforced nature of the process. He then goes on to describe the ways in which the national classificatory grid developed for Central Asia by the Soviet authorities entailed the division of the Turkic peoples into five national republics, the borders of which were further reinforced by census data that reclassified groups originally recognized as separate minorities as belonging to the titular nationality. Thus, in order to maximize the distinctions between the republics and reinforce the borders that separated them, the minority enclaves deliberately included within the borders of non-eponymous republics were to be fully incorporated as citizens of the titular republic in which they resided until such time as Soviet officials found it useful to exploit the destabilizing potential they represented.

Moving away from the geographic and demographic aspects of "official nationalism," Glenn, following Smith (1986), notes that "[n]ational cohesion is also promoted by a 'myth symbol complex' which generates a belief in commonality through a myth of a common ancestor, an emphasis on a common history and the creation or

reinvention of such matters as national traditions" (1999:84-5). He goes on to describe the imposition of official "myth-symbol complexes" on each of the Central Asian republics by Soviet authorities, addressing the deliberate reconstruction of history, reinterpretation of existing national epics, and localization of Islamic practice. Such new inventions were designed to replace the supranational pan-Turkic or pan-Islamic consciousness inherent to indigenous "myth-symbol complexes" and promote state-sponsored national consciousness in their place. While some scholars have suggested that the deliberate manipulation of indigenous history, stories, and traditions in the service of Soviet ideology was never fully accepted by the Turkic peoples (Glenn 1999:85-6, Bennigsen 1985), these state-sponsored "myth-symbol complexes" nonetheless remain salient in the post-Soviet era insofar as aspects of them continue to be embraced by the citizens of the independent nations of Central Asia. Thus, for example, the veneration of Turkic poet and Sufi mystic Ahmet Yesevi, who predated the Kazakhs emergence on the world stage in the sixth century by four centuries, as a national saint of Kazakhstan during the Soviet era continues in post-Soviet Kazakhstan as is reflected in the first Turkish-Kazakh high school and university being named in his honor.

Although the imposition of invented "myth-symbol complexes" on the Central Asian nationalities during the Soviet era has definite implications for the dimensions of nationalism in the post-Soviet era, Glenn's description of the process of national modernization is even more relevant for the purposes of this study. By national modernization, Glenn refers specifically to the imposition of "high culture" on the indigenous "low cultures" and, in particular, the creation, codification, implementation,

and elaboration of a national language designed to replace the multitude of local languages and dialects within each of the Central Asian republics. Glenn writes:

> It is generally accepted that although a national language is not a sine qua non for the existence of a nation it does act in many cases as the keystone of a nation. The Soviet language policy within Central Asia is thus of major importance for the nation-building that occurred within the region. The fact that the Soviet authorities chose to adopt separate national languages as the verbal and written medium of communication within each republic… was to have fundamental implications for the nation-building process within the region" (1999:79).

I now turn to an examination of the role played by language in the creation of the Soviet socialist republics in Central Asia and Azerbaijan as a means of better understanding the importance of language to emergent formulations of nationalism in the post-Soviet Turkic republics.

Linguistic Dimensions in the Creation of the Soviet Turkic "Nationalities"

The role of language in the creation of the Soviet Turkic republics goes as far back as the national delimitation of October 1924, insofar as the borders of the five republics were based largely on the research of Russian and Soviet philologists and corroborating census data that indicated extant dialectical divisions among the major Turkic nationalities (e.g., Akiner 1990). Once the union republics had been established, however, language issues were to take on even greater significance. In large part this was due to the immediate exigencies faced by the Soviet hegemon in its efforts to

communicate the fundamentals of Bolshevik ideology to its new citizens--an endeavor which necessitated dramatically increasing literacy rates as well as developing a means of mass communication. Although language reform was driven largely by such pragmatic considerations, however, it was nonetheless reflective of the larger ideological agenda of the nationalities policies in the sense that it was: 1) considered a corrective to the threat of pan-Turkism (for Soviet authorities could otherwise have capitalized on ongoing indigenous efforts to unite the region around a Turkic *lingua franca*), and 2) a two-pronged effort that simultaneously incorporated aspects of nation-building and assimilation/russification with the objective of creating individual Central Asian nations which would ultimately foster the emergence of a new form of citizenship divorced from the politics of nationality and re-formed on the basis of class solidarity.

Soviet language planning among the Turkic peoples thus began in the 1920s with the creation and standardization of national literary languages for each of the five Central Asian republics with the ultimate aim being "the transformation of tribal and community languages into developed national languages with a rich terminology and vocabulary" (Wheeler 1966:104 as quoted in Glenn 1999:79). Although the elite of each of the nationalities employed a literary language in the pre-revolutionary era, only the Kazakhs possessed a well-established indigenous literary language. The Tajiks wrote in Persian, whilst the Uzbeks employed an ancient literary language known as Chagatai, deemed largely unsuitable to the modern age; the Turkmen wrote in an eighteenth century literary language that was a mixture of Chagatai and Turkmen, and the Kirghiz borrowed Kazakh or Chagatai for their literary needs (Bennigsen and Quelquejay 1961, Bennigsen and

Wimbush 1985, and Bennigsen and Broxup 1983). The region was furthermore home to a welter of different spoken dialects which had often been influenced by surrounding languages and were of limited mutual intelligibility, rendering them of little use for the purposes of mass communication--the more so because they were unwritten and their speakers largely illiterate. Thus, as Shirin Akiner notes in an examination of the dynamics of Soviet language planning in Uzbekistan, the general gist of which also holds true vis-à-vis the other Central Asian republics, 'language planning was necessary… [insofar as the] old literary style was too distant from the everyday speech of the people to be a suitable vehicle for mass communication [and] the dialects differed too greatly amongst themselves to provide a unified base" (1990:104).

Soviet language planning, like other aspects of the nationalities policies, was a manifestation of principles prevalent within contemporaneous European notions of nationality. Indeed, as Akiner (1990), Kirkwood (1990), and Silver (1978), among others, have pointed out, the systematic approach to language planning in Central Asia employed by Soviet authorities closely resembles the characteristic stages of language planning identified by sociolinguists beginning in the 1960s: selection of a norm, codification, implementation, and elaboration (Haugen 1966 and 1987, Fishman 1974b, Eastman 1983). As such, the first step in republican language planning involved judgments as to which of the many extant dialects within the borders of each republic would best serve as the basis for the new and distinct literary languages. Given the rich diversity of local dialects, these were not easy decisions, and early choices were often subject to later revisions, as is evident from the Uzbek example in particular.

Writing of the process of selecting a linguistic norm for Uzbekistan's literary language, Allworth notes that Soviet planners first settled on the vowel-harmonized dialects spoken north of Tashkent and south of Samarkand which "specialists conceived to be the cleanest, most distinctive, most Uzbek version of the tongue" (1990:237). In 1927, however, planners reversed their decision and the "Iranized, unharmonized Tashkent dialect" was declared a more appropriate linguistic base for the national language--a choice which was likely intended to strengthen Tashkent's status over Samarkand as the political hub of the republic, but which likewise offered Soviet authorities the advantage of distancing the Uzbek national language from the other republican languages--and indeed other Turkic languages--in which vowel harmony remained a defining characteristic. This central distinction was later reinforced by the removal from the alphabet of four characters--representing the "open" counterparts (*ä,ö,ü,i*) of the "closed" vowels *a,o,u,i* --deemed unnecessary given that the newly-minted Uzbek national language was no longer marked by vowel harmony (Allworth 1990).[14]

The Uzbek example points to the overtly political nature of decisions and revisions made in the process of designating a linguistic base for the republican languages. Akiner further emphasizes this point, arguing: "The debate over which dialect was to provide the foundation for the national language was couched in linguistic terms, but, as with all the other language questions, was actually a political battle between the 'nationalist' faction and the pro-Russian faction. The latter won on every count…. Other dialects may have been 'purer' or more 'typical', but it was that group of dialects that had

[14] See also Bennigsen and Wimbush (1985) and Fierman (1991a).

all the practical advantages. They represented the language of the nerve centers of the economic, political, and administrative life of the republic" (1990:104). In addition to the pragmatic advantages and political considerations Akiner highlights, decisions made in aid of designating the linguistic base of the new republican languages were in keeping with the overarching ideological objective of the nationalities policies to create discrete national entities in Central Asia. In short, language reform was a key element in efforts by the Soviet state to promote "recognition of distinct national territories…[which ultimately proved] critical in transforming the fluid relationships between language and ethnicity into a cohesive sense of nationality (Dave 1996:76-7).

The next phase of language planning to be carried out by Russian philologists and their local proxies involved the creation of a standardized lexicon, the codification of grammatical rules, and the adoption of an orthographic system. Given the pragmatic need for mass communication, the expansion and standardization of a lexicon for each of the republics was of particular importance. In this, as in other linguistic matters, pro-Russian factions triumphed over their nationalist counterparts, who recommended drawing necessary lexical items from the older literary languages or surviving dialects, and by the mid 1930s, the lexicon of each of the republican languages had been "internationalized" (i.e., russified) through the adoption of Russian loanwords that replaced Arabic or Persian borrowings or described new concepts. Although lexical commonalities served to unite rather than divide the republican languages, the broader shared identity they promoted was Soviet rather than pan-Turkic or pan-Islamic. This phase of language planning thus represented the second goal of the nationalities policies,

namely the russification of the Turkic languages as a means of facilitating Russian language learning and the ultimate creation of a new society of Soviet people.

The Role of Orthography in the Creation of the Soviet Turkic "Nationalities"

Orthographic reform in the Central Asian republics followed a course similar to language reform insofar as it was intended to mitigate the threat posed by pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism, create independent republics among the Turkic peoples in Central Asia, and ultimately foster the creation of the new Soviet people. At first, Soviet planners chose to retain the Arabic script, which already had a long history among the Central Asian elite, and the five national literary languages created in the early 1920s were rendered in the Arabic letters. Between 1927 and 1930, however, the Arabic script was replaced by the Unified Turkic Alphabet, a Latin-based orthographic system devised on the basis of recommendations reached at the 1926 Baku Turcology Congress.

Insofar as the United Turkic Alphabet unified the Turkic languages under a single, Latin-based script, state support for its adoption seems to suggest a certain indulgence for pan-Turkist sentiment in the early years of Soviet rule, however numerous scholars have suggested that the decision to replace the Arabic with the Latin script was actually a strategic move by the Soviet state designed to mitigate the threat posed by pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism by distancing the Turkic peoples of Central Asia from the Anatolian Turks, with whom they shared ethnic and linguistic ties, and other Moslems, with whom they shared Islam and the Arabic alphabet (Hostler 1993, Henze 1977,

Karamanlı and Pirverdioglu 1993). Proponents of this view have further argued that compulsory Latinization offered the additional advantage of rendering Turkic literary works unintelligible to future generations, thereby ensuring greater receptivity to Soviet state influence.

The notion that the adoption of a Latin-based orthography was ultimately designed to disrupt relations between the Turkic peoples and their Anatolian cousins likewise finds support in later policies of Soviet state, most notably the abrupt decision to replace the Unified Turkic Alphabet with Cyrillic-based orthographies after Turkey's formal adoption of a modified Latin alphabet reintroduced the possibility of literary exchange and linguistic rapprochement. The languages of the five republics were thus transliterated into Cyrillic between 1939 and 1941 as a means of facilitating russification of the republican languages and easing Russian language learning with the ultimate goal of producing loyal citizens of the Soviet Union. The creation of separate Cyrillic alphabets for each of the republics further served the assimilatory goals of the nationalities policies by reinforcing the distinctness of each republic, thereby diminishing the grounds for their possible rapprochement. Thus, while the implementation of the Unified Turkic Alphabet in the 1920s promoted the linguistic unification of the Turkic peoples but estranged them from the Anatolian Turks, the imposition of the Cyrillic alphabet (or, more precisely, Cyrillic alphabets) on the Turkic languages in the late 1930s and early 1940s served to isolate the Central Asian Turks from one another as well as their Anatolian cousins.

Regardless of whether initial support for national languages and the Unified Turkic Alphabet constituted a premeditated precursor to the linguistic reforms of the 1930s or simply a "false start" by a regime that had not fully consolidated control over its far-flung regions or articulated its ultimate aims, Soviet linguistic policies were undeniably implicated in a political agenda that was far more broad-reaching than simply dividing the Turkic peoples from their Turkish cousins. Part of the well-documented "*divide et impera*" policies of the Soviet authorities, linguistic and orthographic reform constituted a deliberate political program aimed at creating distinct nationalities, by standardizing local dialects within a defined geographic span into distinct national languages. Such efforts sought to eradicate any sense of supranational identification--i.e., all traces of pan-Turkism or pan-Islamism--amongst the Turkic peoples, who were instead to become nationals of a particular republic or province and eventually loyal citizens of the Soviet Union (the proverbial *sovetskii chelovek,* or "Soviet man"). This process was aided by the contemporaneous emergence of disagreements among Turkic intellectuals between those who continued to advocate a broad pan-Turkic nationalism and those who promoted a more circumscribed republic-based nationalism. With the support of the Soviet state, the latter were to prevail, thereby paving the way for the creation of separate Cyrillic alphabets for the individual Turkic languages (Akiner 1990). Thereafter, even though political issues continued to be played out on the linguistic front, the debate turned to more localized intra-republican issues (Akiner 1990, Fierman 1991a).

Nationalism over Pan-Turkism in the Early Turkish Republic

While the 1930s saw the consolidation of central control over the sociocultural and linguistic identities of the Soviet Turkic republics and the further refinement of the concept of Soviet nationalism, on the other side of the Iron Curtain, a more traditionally independent brand of nationalism had taken root in Turkey. With the attempt by the Entente powers to divide Turkish territory amongst themselves in the wake of World War I, pan-Turkist ideology was temporarily put aside as nationalist sentiment was rallied in defense of the Anatolian heartland. Even as the Turkish war of independence raged on, Kemal Atatürk had already begun formulating/ promulgating his vision for a new Turkish nation. In a 1921 speech delivered in the town of Eskişehir, Atatürk rejected both pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism as the basis for the as-yet unrealized nation-state. "Neither Islamic union nor Turanism[15] may constitute a doctrine, or logical policy for us. Henceforth, the Government policy of the new Turkey is to consist in living independently, relying on Turkey's own sovereignty within her national borders" (as quoted in Landau 1995a:74). While the exact disposition of Turkey's national borders was yet to be determined, it was, by that time, relatively clear that they were not to encompass the full reach of lands considered by pan-Turkists to comprise the ancestral Turkish homeland.

[15] Turanism is a closely related but a more general term than pan-Turkism, since the latter applies only to peoples of Turkic ethnicity whereas the former refers to a broader swath of peoples, potentially including the Mongols and other peoples belonging to the Altaic language group to which the Turkic languages are considered to belong. Turanism and pan-Turkism have, however, largely been used interchangeably to describe the ideology behind efforts to unite the Turkic (and related) peoples (e.g., Landau 1995).

By the late 1920s and early 1930s, Atatürk and his supporters had consolidated their power sufficiently to see through an extensive program of social and linguistic reforms that capitalized on notions of ethnic identity and patriotic pride to instill a new national identity (Lewis 1961, Kinross 1964, Zürcher 1997, Mango 1999), and in an October 1933 speech celebrating the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Turkish Republic, Atatürk sounded the death knell of political pan-Turkism in Turkey, arguing:

> Today the Soviet Union is our friend, our neighbor, our ally. We are in need of this friendship. But no one can say today what will come to be tomorrow. Just like the Ottoman Empire, just like the Austro-Hungarian Empire, it could fall apart, it could crumble. The world could reach a new equilibrium. And in that case Turkey must know what it will do. Under the governance of this alliance we have brothers of shared origin with whom we share one language, one belief system. We must be ready to take responsibility for and support them. To stand ready does not mean simply keeping quiet and waiting for that day. We must prepare ourselves. How do the people prepare themselves for this? By laying the foundation of solid spiritual bridges. Language is a bridge. Belief is a bridge. History is a bridge. We must dig back to our roots and unite within our shared history that circumstance has separated. We mustn't wait for them (the Outside Turks) to come to us. We must go to them.[16]

Thus was inaugurated the official policy of Turkish nationalism, in which the sphere for ethnolinguistic consolidation was confined to the contemporaneous borders of the Turkish nation. Although the official separation between pan-Turkism and the Turkish nationalist ideology that defined the nascent Turkish state was to have significant implications for Cold War era policy toward the Turkic peoples of the Soviet Union,

[16] Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, 29 October, 1933, Republic's 10th anniversary speech, available online at: http://www.istanbul.edu.tr/edebiyat/edebiyat/dekanlik/arastirma_merkezleri/avrasya_arkeoloji_enstitusu.htm, last accessed August 2, 2011.

which was, in turn, to inform, as well as considerably constrain, the initial development of a foreign policy orientation toward the Turkic peoples of Central Asia during the waning years of the Soviet empire and following its collapse in 1991, it is also important to note that this separation was not as distinct as it has sometimes been portrayed. Arguing that the two ideological frameworks late-Ottoman revolutionaries resorted to in seeking to rescue the Ottoman Empire--i.e., pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism--were ultimately discredited by the empire's demise and thereafter publicly rejected by the founders of the modern nation-state that emerged from its ashes, Landau (1995a) notes that aspects of those forsaken ideologies were nonetheless co-opted and incorporated into the new state's nationalist ideology. Thus, the pan-Turkist agenda was absorbed into the state not only through the appointment of figures harboring pan-Turkist leanings to government positions, but more importantly through cooptation of aspects of pan-Turkist philosophy.

Nowhere was this more evident than in the significant influence on the development of Turkish national identity exerted by the work of sociologist Ziya Gökalp, particularly his concept of the nation as a linguistically and culturally unified entity in which membership was inherent, rather than chosen, which retained key aspects of pan-Turkism.[17] Thus, while Gökalp's expansive, three-tiered model of national identity, delineated in his 1923 *Principles of Turkism*,[18] paved the way for Turkish nationalism by

[17] In other words, Gökalp's concept was of ethnonationalism rather than civic nationalism.

[18] This work was published in English in 1968 by E.J. Brill in an edition translated and edited by Robert Devereux.

identifying, as the most contracted tier of national identity, an entity comprised solely of the Turks living within the borders of the modern Turkish republic, it nonetheless accounted for overarching, pan-Turkic affinities with speakers of the Oguz branch of Turkic languages at the second tier, and speakers of the more linguistically distant Kipçak branch of Turkic languages at the third tier. Gökalp's paradigm thus divided overarching pan-Turkist ideology into three increasingly-expanding ideologies--Turkism, Oghuzism, and Turanism--thereby enabling basic pan-Turkist ideology to be equally easily mustered in support of a modern nation-state or a broader pan-national, or supranational, entity. In this sense, the discourse of pan-Turkism, although held up as a foil to the Turkish nation, and hence officially subsumed to the state, was far from excised, and the possibility remained, as is indeed implied in Atatürk's tenth anniversary speech, that the contracted form of Turkish nationalism might one day be expanded to encompass a broader Turkic nationalism.

At this juncture, it is, however, important to note the continued involvement of pan-Turkism in the politics of identity within Turkey. Although Gökalp was explicit in denying that the ideological force of pan-Turkism was in any way political, and pan-Turkist thought was unequivocally sidelined in state politics,[19] it nonetheless became entangled over the years, in the fractious identity politics surrounding domestic political struggles over the orientation of the Turkish nation. Thus, while as a coherent and

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[19] Gökalp wrote: "Turkism is not a political party but a scientific, philosophic and aesthetic school of thought. Or, to phrase it differently, it is a course of cultural effort and renovation. Yet Turkism cannot remain entirely indifferent to political ideals, for Turkish culture involves political as well as other ideals…." (1968[1923]:125-6).

autonomous political ideology, pan-Turkism "continued only latently, as a tiny peripheral and semiclandestine movement nourished by an ideology propounded in a number of irregularly published periodicals whose brief existences were terminated by a lack of funds or government closures" (Landau 1995b:76), strains of pan-Turkist thought continued to hold sway within certain conservative, nationalist circles. As a result of the reverence with which it was regarded within such radical and marginalized groups, and due in no small part to the unfortunate association of many of its early ideologues with Nazism (Landau 1974), pan-Turkism thus quickly became synonymous, among the liberal Turkish elite, with territorial irredentism--i.e., political pan-Turkism--and racism.

This ideological divide was further reinforced by the 1969 founding of the National Action Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*, or MHP), whose party platform is rooted in ultra-nationalist ideology shaded with pan-Turkist overtones. Driven by the exigencies of survival as a domestic political party, the MHP generally emphasized Turkish nationalism over pan-Turkism, and tended to focus its concern for the "outside Turks" (*dış Türkler*) on the plight of Turks living in the peripheries of Europe and the Middle East (e.g., Cyprus, Bulgaria, and Syria) rather than in Central Asia, which, although the cradle of pan-Turkist ideology and hence inextricably associated with its principles, was firmly sealed off behind the Iron Curtain. Nonetheless, its adherents never fully abandoned their concern for the Soviet Turkic peoples and a desire, albeit latent, to unify, either culturally or politically, the so-called Turkic world (e.g., Çağlar 1990, Poulton 1997, Arıkan 1999).

Defining themselves in opposition to such radical irredentist, ethnic-based politics, Turkey's liberal elite, after an initial surge of curiosity, deliberately eschewed any interest in the Turkic peoples, as an overt rejection of the principles of pan-Turkism and indication of their affinity for Western-style nationalism. This was brought home to me on a personal level throughout my fieldwork as my local affiliation was with a liberal, Western-leaning academic institution, whose faculty, although themselves engaged in research into Turkey's political, economic, and diplomatic relations within *Avrasya* (Eurasia)--a broad construct that incorporates both Europe and Asia and hence encompasses the Turkic republics--were nonetheless skeptical of and troubled by my interest in linguistic and sociocultural relations within the *Türk dünyası* (Turkic world), as indeed they were by my husband's academic interest in traditional Turkish wrestling.

Concern for the cultural dimensions of the "Turkic world," it was felt, even by members of the sociology/anthropology department, betrayed a search for the primordial essence of Turk-ness, which not only recalled controversial early republican era efforts to "purify" the Turkish language by replacing Arabic and Persian loanwords with neologisms constructed on roots derived from the "pure" languages of the Turkic peoples, but also betrayed a concern with preserving traditional Turkish culture, a sentiment which was deemed politically reactionary within a community hegemonically conditioned by their socioeconomic and political position to revere Turkey's founding father's injunction to eschew the "backwardness" bred by traditional culture, in the drive for westernized modernization. Thus, not only was "Eurasia" the preferred term over "Turkic world" for referring to the Turkic republics, but research was best restricted to

exploring political and economic issues. As a result, my fellow liberal academics had difficulty understanding why a western academic, schooled in the scholarly traditions they sought to emulate, would chose to study such an inconsequential issue, particularly one so tied to marginalized reactionary politics, and were concerned that my research would contribute to what they perceived to be widespread impressions of Turkey as "backward" and "racist." In all fairness, my colleagues, while wrong in suspecting my research motives, were largely correct in linking an interest in the culture of the "Turkic world" with conservative and/or reactionary politics, as the proliferation of publications on the topic published by conservative governmental, quasi-governmental, and non-governmental organizations will attest. Thus, as one of my students, when asked about Turkic identity politics studiously protested: "This assumption that Turks have a natural affinity for the Turkic peoples is patently untrue. Growing up in Izmir, I feel more cultural commonality with Greeks than I do with the so-called Turks of Central Asia. This is simply the reactionary racist view of the 'idealists'[20] that has hijacked public policy."

In this sense, although Turkish diplomats, politicians, and even scholars claim a pronounced distinction between Turkish nationalism and pan-Turkism (Ersanlı-Behar 2002), a fair amount of overlap between the two ideologies remains, resulting in a certain

[20] Inspired by the writings of renowned pan-Turkists Ziya Gökalp and Nihal Atsız, members of the Grey Wolves (*Bozkurtlar*) youth organization, founded in 1969 as the youth wing of Turkey's ultra-nationalist National Action Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*) but now denying direct links with the party, have adopted the moniker "idealists" (*ülkücüler*). The Grey Wolves rally around various pan-Turkic causes and their platform calls for the establishment of greater Turkistan, or Turan.

degree of analytical indeterminacy. According to Hostler, "[i]n the Turkish republic, nationalism forms a distinctive trait of its structure, constitution, and current policy. In times of war or revolutionary change within neighboring areas during the twentieth century, Turkish policy has, [however], historically moved toward Pan-Turkism" (1993:4). This tendency, Hostler argues, is what underpins the current influence of "Turkish nationalism (especially the Pan-Turkish variety of Turkish nationalism) in the policies of the Turkish Republic and the actions of the politically developed Turkish-speaking peoples" of Central Asia and the Caucasus in the aftermath of the Soviet Union's disintegration (1993:4). Thus, while the brand of nationalism developed in the Soviet Turkic republics was deliberately designed to eliminate pan-Turkic sentiment, the form nationalism took in Turkey, did not exclude a continued, albeit secondary, interest in the broader Turkic world, at least not on ideological grounds. This ideological distinction in national cultures, was to become a key factor in post-Soviet efforts aimed at linguistic, sociocultural, and geopolitical rapprochement within the Turkic world.

THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE AND ORTHOGRAPHY IN NATIONALISM IN TURKEY

As with the development of the Soviet Turkic nationalities, language and orthography played a defining role in the formation of nationalist identity in the Turkish republic. The specific ways in which linguistic issues were instrumental to the development of Turkish national identity will be addressed in much greater detail in chapter five as a means of setting the stage for an examination of recent innovations in

orthographic practice that I suggest constitute a diffuse language ideological debate about Turkey's shifting national, regional, and international identity in the post-Cold war era. Nonetheless, with the aim of providing contextualization for issues addressed in intervening chapters, I offer a brief outline of the topic below, focusing on the ideological dimensions of the 1932 First (Turkish) Language Congress as well as on divergences between the United Turkic Alphabet agreed at the 1926 Baku Congress and the Turkish alphabet unveiled in 1928.

While the Soviet Turks were engaged in implementing the new Latin-based alphabet agreed at the Baku Turcology Congress across Central Asia, the issue of orthographic reform, broached but rejected on several occasions under Ottoman rule, had likewise resurfaced in the newly-established Republic of Turkey. Arguments in favor of reforming the Turkish alphabet were first reintroduced at the Izmir Economic Conference of 1923, but five years had passed before the new republican government took up the issue. Finally, in May 1928, Turkey's Council of Ministers established the Language Commission (*Dil Encümeni*) to guide transition from the Arabo-Persian alphabet to a Latin-based orthography.

In less than four months, a new Latin-based alphabet had been devised, ratified, and implemented throughout the Turkish republic. Although members of the Language Commission were certainly aware of orthographic developments occurring amongst the Soviet Turkic peoples, little attempt at coordination appears to have been made. This seeming lack of coordination is, however, not surprising insofar as the Turkish alphabet reform was conceived in an atmosphere of nascent nationalism in which pan-Turkist

concerns with the larger Turkic world were deliberately subsumed to the exigencies of nation-building within the Anatolian homeland, as will be explored at greater length below. In this sense, the decision on the part of Turkish language reformers to create a uniquely Turkish alphabet was in keeping with the political orientation of the new republic and foreign policy objectives of its founder, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. In the end analysis, only twenty-three of the twenty-nine letters in the new Turkish alphabet formulated by the commission matched those of the *Birləşdirilmiş Jeni Tyrk Əlifbasь*. Thus, while both alphabets were based on the same orthographic system, differences between the characters of the *Birləşdirilmiş Jeni Tyrk Əlifbasь* and the new Turkish alphabet hampered orthographic rapprochement with the Turkic peoples of Central Asia, effectively extending the nascent Turkish state's policy of circumscribed Turkish nationalism over expansive pan-Turkism to the linguistic realm.

Four years after the successful implementation of the new Latin-based Turkish alphabet, attention turned to the more contentious issue of language reform. In July 1932, the Society for Study of the Turkish Language (*Türk Dil Tetkik Cemiyeti*, or TDTC), later renamed the Turkish Language Society (*Türk Dil Kurumu*, or TDK), was established and tasked with organizing a meeting of linguists and language professionals designed to inaugurate this second phase of linguistic reform. The First Language Congress (*Birinci Dil Kurultayı*) was hastily convened in September 1932, with subsequent congresses organized biannually thereafter. Although the effects of decisions reached during the congress were not as patently and immediately obvious as they had been with the earlier alphabet reform, the tenor of discourse among delegates to the

congress was telling of the importance accorded language as key instrument in the actualization of nationalist ideology (Heyd 1954, Landau 1993, Lewis 1999).

Convened just nine years after the founding of the Turkish republic, during a period in which Atatürk and his advisors, having completed core reforms centered around the secularization and Westernized modernization of Turkish society, had turned to the cultural sphere (Landau 1993), the First Language Congress was an integral part of state's nationalizing project, and hence focused almost exclusively on Anatolian Turkish. Influenced by Herderian notions of "the folk" as the wellspring of the nation, delegates extolled the virtues of the Turkish language as emblematic of the Turkish nation and advocated its adoption, in place of Ottoman Turkish, as the national language of the Turkish republic. Encouraging Turkish patriots to eschew the difficult, contrived and elitist Ottoman language in favor of the pure and simple elegance of Turkish, congress participants moreover called for the liberation of Turkish from Ottoman's pernicious influence, proposing the creation of *öz Türkçe*, a purified Turkish free of grammatical and lexical influence from Arabic and Persian.

The Turkish language itself was furthermore glorified by reference to studies in historical and comparative linguistics, which sought to grant it authority and authenticity within the framework of Kemalist ideology by depicting it as Western, primeval, and proto-linguistic. Thus, several delegates offered morphological and lexical data derived from comparative analysis that suggested the inclusion of Turkish in the Indo-European language group, albeit on the basis of often questionable criteria, while other presenters used similar methods to draw connections between Turkish and such ancient languages as

Sanskrit, Hittite, and Sumerian. From the latter research was derived the goropist claim that Turkish was the "original" language from which all other languages derived, which, after being forwarded at the congress, was to gain state sanction under the rubric of the "sun language theory" (*güneş dil teorisi*[21]).

What united these diverse lecture topics was that they each served to bolster the driving force of the Kemalist agenda--rapid modernization of the Turkish state in accordance with the principles articulated by Atatürk's Six Arrows (*Altı Ok*) doctrine--republicanism (*cumhuriyetçilik*), populism (*halkçılık*), nationalism (*milliyetçilik*), secularism (*laiklik*), etatism (*devletçilik*), and reformism (*inkılapçılık*). In keeping with the much publicized goal of bringing the written language in line with the spoken language of the people, populism constituted a particularly strong theme of congress presentations, as indeed it did throughout the language reform process.[22] The guiding principle of the congress was, however, reformism. Reformism had been identified as an essential component of Kemalism--the last element of Atatürk's Six Arrows doctrine--just a year earlier, at the 1931 party congress of the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, or CHP), and its addition to the CHP's party platform implicitly served to justify the previous eight years of far-reaching, often controversial,

[21] I have always been amused that the appellation of this goropist theory includes the Western (Latin-derived) loanword "theory" (teori), but the cognitive dissonance implied is explained away by the theory itself--if Turkish constitutes the original language, then even foreign loanwords are Turkish-derived.

[22] Populism was a guiding principle throughout the language reform process. As such, all Turks were considered members of the TDTC (Landau 1993), plans were drawn up to establish branches of the TDK in all regions and possibly all districts of the country, and language recommendations were solicited from the public (Landau 1993).

reforms and reinforce the necessity of pushing forward with the remaking of Turkish society.

Thus, with the single exception of a lecture by distinguished journalist Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın who opposed language reform as an unnecessary and potentially harmful means of artificially managing the natural course of linguistic development, the participants' lectures all supported language reform as an essential component of Kemalist restructuring. Yalçın's anomalously unorthodox address was subjected to sharp criticism by fellow participants who accused him of fatalistic and reactionary thinking. The vehemence with which Yalçın's viewpoint was attacked by other participants suggests that the 1932 congress, although ostensibly convened for linguistic purposes, simultaneously sought to promulgate a politico-ideological perspective on the nation's future to its citizens. Thus, in keeping with Atatürk's goal to publicize, and thereby gain popular support for language reform and related TDTK activities, participants gave lectures that intentionally portrayed language reform "as one of the ways in which Kemalism would secularize and modernize Turkey and the Turks." (Landau 1993:287).

At this juncture it is important to note that insofar as the primary focus for Atatürk and his advisors was the Turkish nation rather than the Turkic *ethnie* (Smith 1995), little attention was paid to the related languages of Soviet Turkic peoples. While some congress participants presented lexical examples from the Turkic languages in aid of demonstrating a link between Turkish and Indo-European languages, and others suggested deriving replacements for Arabic and Persian loanwords from Turkic roots, virtually no substantive attention was devoted to an examination of the Turkic languages

in their own right (Landau 1993). Thus, in much the same way that early republican-era Kemalists made reference to the historic Turkic empires of Central Asia as a means of demonstrating the greatness of the Turkic peoples--and, by extension, the Turkish nation--yet eschewed contact with the Soviet Turkic peoples out of concern over complicating Turkey's international relations and endangering the security of the nascent state, references to the Turkic languages were likewise pragmatic, serving to reinforce claims regarding the richness of the Turkish language without entangling Turkey in unnecessarily complex relations with the Turkic peoples. Insofar as the Kemalist state had made it abundantly clear that its focus was on defending and enriching the Turkish nation within contemporaneous borders rather than seeking to expand such boundaries though ill-advised adventurism amongst the Soviet Turkic peoples, detailed discussion of the Turkic languages would undoubtedly have been misplaced. In short, linguistic and orthographic reform were viewed as handmaidens to the overarching nationalizing agenda of the Turkish state.

NATIONALISM AND PAN-TURKISM IN THE EMERGENT POST-COLD WAR TURKIC WORLD

And so, for the next sixty years, the Turks of Turkey and the Turkic peoples of the Soviet Union suffered the enforced separation of the Cold War era causing their analogous, yet already separate, histories to diverge even further, and their respective languages to follow suit. By the fall of 1990, however, the Soviet Union was in crisis

following the liberation of Eastern Europe, the impending abrogation of the Warsaw pact, and the cascading declarations of sovereignty among the union republics. Moreover, Moscow's repressive and often brutal measures against incipient nationalist movements during the final months of Soviet power served to galvanize nationalist sentiment in many of the union republics and autonomous regions. Freed from strict oversight by the Soviet state, the republics of Central Asia and the Caucasus found themselves in need of a new, independent national identity and at no loss for regional and international actors ready to offer assistance in this regard with the hope of influencing the course of national development in the region in ways beneficial to their own interests (e.g., Fuller 1992).

As Russia, despite being hobbled by domestic concerns, worked to reassert its influence over its former dominions, Turkey, Iran, China, and the U.S. all rushed to establish influence in the region, their rival efforts leading scholars, journalists, and other observers to dub this period the "New Great Game" after the historic "Great Game" rivalry for dominion in Central Asia played out in the 1800s between the Russian and British Empires.[23] As Winrow however, notes, the "problem with the great game analogy is that it erroneously assumes that the Central Asians themselves are mere passive bystanders" (1998:107). As noted in chapter one, not only were the Turkic peoples actively engaged in choosing among "models" for development proselytized by their powerful neighbors, but were also proactively involved in shaping their own futures through the process of post-Soviet nation-building. Within this endeavor, issues of language and orthography played an early and important role.

[23] For a detailed history of the Great Game, see Hopkirk (1994).

In the intervening decades, the Turkic republics had become fully integrated constituents of the Soviet Union, subject to later stage Soviet linguistic policies that, in privileging Russian, had led to linguistic diglossia, which spawned a generation of urbanites unfamiliar with their native languages and paved the way for the entry of numerous Russian loanwords into the Turkic languages. Savvy, nonetheless, to the central proposition of linguistic nationalism--the one language/one people principle--one of the first orders of business in each of the post-Soviet Turkic republics was the rehabilitation of the titular language and restoration of its privileged status vis-à-vis Russian (Landau and Kellner-Heinkele 2001). If Russian, as the language of "inter-republican" communication, was the marker of the Soviet state, the titular languages were then symbols of the newly independent nations and the authority of their fledgling states. As it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to offer a comprehensive account of the politics of language and sociopolitical dimensions of linguistic nationalism in the ex-Soviet Turkic republics--a topic which has already been ably addressed by Landau and Heinkele (2001)--I will simply note that among the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples, issues of language and orthography, including the attitudes they were rooted in and the policies they wrought, were intricately entwined with the forging of independent nationhood and, hence, the broader politics of identity in the post-Soviet era.

In contrast to the prevailing turmoil within the newly-minted former Soviet republics, the Turkish nation was, by the early 1990s, well-established within the international community and had entered a period of relative stability. In the intervening years, Turkey had largely consolidated its national character, weathering three military

coups yet emerging the only Western-style democracy in the Islamic Middle East, and a well-respected international actor. A valuable member of NATO and official applicant to the EU, Turkey had exploited its geopolitical role as a bulwark against the Soviet bloc to firmly affiliate itself with the West. In a virtual demonstration of this burgeoning affiliation, the Turkish language had also shifted westward. Having replaced the Arabic script with a Latin-based alphabet and expelled Arabic and Persian borrowings during the early republican era, Turkish speakers had, over the decades, absorbed countless loanwords from the West into their language, as will be detailed at greater length in chapter five. At the same time, however, partially as a result of an intense period of economic and sociocultural liberalization in the late 1980s and early 1990s (e.g., Heper and Sayarı 2002) that precipitated Turkey's greater exposure to the increasing pressures of globalization and partially as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union and Turkey's consequent loss of its defining status as a Cold War "buffer state," there was also an incipient, but palpable, sense of an impending shift in Turkey's relationship with the Western world, which was to color domestic post-Cold War era identity politics and impact the politics of rapprochement within the Turkic world.

Nonetheless, at the time of the Soviet Union's collapse, Turkey's relative stability and firm international standing rendered the country reasonably well-placed to offer itself as a developmental "model" to the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples and "bridge" to the Western world. Although political pan-Turkism within Turkey had been effectively incorporated into and subsumed by the nationalizing project of the early republican period, and kept in check in later years by the reality of international relations in the Cold War era, the

ideology of cultural pan-Turkism had nonetheless survived in the ranks of various organizations and their associated media organs. Thus, while pan-Turkism seemed effectively dead as a political movement, the fate of cultural pan-Turkism remained far less clear. In an article published just before the collapse of the Soviet Union, noted Turcologist Jacob Landau (1988) opined that "one may indeed determine that Pan-Turkism has failed. After all, even if the idea is kept alive by a handful of adherents, its current political impact is hardly noticeable." This assessment, he continues, holds true only for political pan-Turkism, for it is "nearly impossible to evaluate the success of a cultural Pan-movement, particularly cultural Pan-Turkism, over an entire century and such vast territory (1988:1-2).

Within a year of Landau's assessment, events in Soviet lands seemed to offer the first inkling that Atatürk's prediction of eventual collapse of the Soviet Union and liberation of the Turkic peoples was at hand. This was the precise moment that those with pan-Turkist sympathies had anxiously awaited for nearly seventy years and they eagerly seized the opportunity to reestablish lapsed affiliations with the soon to be ex-Soviet Turkic peoples. In the early days of the post-Soviet era, those with pan-Turkist leanings were, however, not alone in their interest in the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples. The progressive disintegration of the Soviet Union had awakened a burgeoning nostalgic interest in the Turkic peoples within Turkish society at large, and linguistic kinship was the variable that most captured the public imagination. Turks, who had long been forced to learn English or French to function outside Turkish borders, were now captivated by

the promise of traveling eastward to the Great Wall of China speaking their native tongue.

No longer, it seemed, was interest in the Turkic peoples of the former Soviet Union the purview of marginalized political groups in Turkey, it had become an abiding preoccupation in the society at large. An editorial written for the center-left daily newspaper *Cumhuriyet* by Haluk Şahin deftly captured the prevailing mood, during a time in which it appeared as though interest in the Turkic peoples could no longer be neatly aligned with deep-seated, left-right divides in Turkish politics--divergent approaches to the Turkic world that Şahin termed the "sentimental racism" of the right and the "intellectual terrorism" of the left.

> Since the collapse of the bi-polar world, we are forced to think about from scratch a number of topics with which we are faced in this uncertain environment…. One of these is the topic of relations with the people and states of Turkic origin [Türk kökenli] living outside of Turkey.
>
> Formerly, namely in the bi-polar world in which everything was divided into black and white, it would have been necessary to keep an eye on a person accused of Turanism for discussing relations with the Turks outside of Turkey. Perhaps out of fear of such a reaction, no one apart from Turanists dared touch on these topics, thereby proving the truth of the accusation.
>
> Nonetheless like any number of other taboos, this taboo has collapsed in the past few years. In a period of conditional reflex, many things that defy comprehension are becoming possible. In the meantime, relations with the Turkish-speaking [Türkçe konuşan] peoples living in countries other than Turkey can be addressed in a more rational manner.
>
> The topic, divorced from the right's sentimental monopoly that supports its racist approach and the left's intellectual terrorism, turns into an agenda item over which intelligent discussions can be held. In this period in which the winds of war are blowing in the Caucasus and the Turkish-speaking peoples in the Soviet Union

> are making very important decisions, there is an urgent need for such a new approach.[24]

Thus, whereas a succession of former Turkish governments had officially abjured pan-Turkism (Landau 1995a), as interest in the "outside Turks" emerged from the shadows and swept the nation, Turkish state actors joined in embracing this fundamental aspect of pan-Turkism. While categorical in disavowing any interest in establishing the greater Turkic empire envisioned by radical pan-Turkists, largely out of fear of provoking Russia or rousing unease in the West, Turkish officials could not long resist co-opting pan-Turkist rhetoric in speaking of Turkey's relations with its "brother nations." Such was the case, for example, when Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel, during a 1992 visit to the region, suggested a possible union of Turkic States, thereby giving a state-like gloss to an essentially pan-Turkist vision (Aydın 2003a, Başlamış 2001).[25] Even Demirel's attempts to dismiss allegations that Turkey's interest in the Turkic peoples was pan-Turkic, were tinged with cultural, if not political, pan-Turkist imagery:

> Turks, no matter where they are, are our brothers; no matter what name they go by. Kirghiz Turks, Uzbek Turks, Turkmen Turks, Azeri Turks, Meshketi Turks are all our brothers…. In short, the country known as Turkey belongs to all Turkdom and we the Turkic world consider ourselves one big family. No one should take offense at this, this is not a pan-Turkist movement. Because, in the end, what offense can possibly be taken from fraternal peoples saying "we are brothers"? We say: "Let each country govern itself, let each stand upon its own feet. (Turgut 2001:78)

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[24] This article appeared in *Cumhuriyet*, 27 November 1991, p.3.

[25] An article on this topic appeared in *Cumhuriyet*, 19 January 1990, p.140.

Given such rhetoric, Turkish officials' denials of any pan-Turkist influence in Turkey's relations with the Turkic peoples rang false to many long-time Turkey observers, including political scientist Gareth Winrow, who asked: "[I]n underlining common Turkic ethnic ties, is the current Turkish government not actually playing the Pan-Turkist card?" (1992:108). Focusing in particular on the ortak alfabe project, Winrow goes on to ask:

> Is not Ankara's concern for…language reform in Central Asia through the proposed reintroduction of the Latin script an attempt to reverse the earlier forced magnification of dialectical differences into separate languages?" Is this not an attempt to realize one of the dreams of Gasprinsky, arguably the most famous of the Pan-Turkists? (1992:108).

More importantly, the pan-Turkist undercurrent in the rhetoric of Turkish officials--not to mention diplomats, businessmen, and scholars--was also not lost on the Turkic peoples and their leaders. Although the collapse of the Soviet Union had roused equal levels of interest and curiosity in their Turkish brothers among the Turkic peoples, it is important to note that where pan-Turkism had been subsumed to national ideology in Turkey, it had been vilified as "bourgeois" and "chauvinistic" and all but expunged among the Soviet Turkic peoples. As a result, Turkic officials, while expressing an interest in rapprochement with Turkey, were not only far more measured in their rhetoric, but also careful to distinguish between pragmatic cultural rapprochement and pan-Turkism. Thus, in the words of President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev:

> In this part of the world, pan-Turkism becomes a political current only in reaction to the Soviet rule and 70 years of neglect… I am against the idea of putting people into solid frames by espousing the cause of pan-Turkism or pan-Islamism. These have no chance of success. What we are witnessing now is a Turkic rapprochement due to the fact that sharing common values is easier among the Turkic-speaking peoples. But this cannot lead to dangerous chauvinism.[26]

Such a stance was in the pragmatic best interests of the leaders of the Turkic republics, who, as ex-Soviet figures transformed into newly-minted nationalists, had pinned their futures to national development and feared losing control over their respective nations to such competing ideologies as pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism in the struggle over post-Soviet identity politics. Furthermore, as Landau and Kellner-Heinkele (2001) point out, the republics these Turkic rulers had inherited were far from ethnically homogenous, and there was, as a result, a real need to maintain at least the appearance of liberal pluralism if destabilizing inter-ethnic conflict were to be avoided. Nonetheless, the relative success of these leaders in curbing pan-Turkist impulses through reference to "dangerous chauvinism" is largely due to this perspective having already gained widespread acceptance within the populace during the Soviet era. Thus, while the various Turkic leaders were each known to employ the rhetoric of pan-Turkism in their dealings with Turkish counterparts, particularly when it suited their purposes, in practice, they pursued, almost exclusively, the particular interests of their respective nations (e.g., Landau 1995b).

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[26] This quote appeared in an article in *Cumhuriyet*, 16 December 1991, as quoted in Aydın (2003:157).

SOME THOUGHTS ON IMAGINING THE NATIONAL AND THE SUPRANATIONAL

Having described the role of pan-Turkism and nationalism in the historical development of the Turkic world as well as the linguistic cultures of its respective members, it may also prove analytically useful, before proceeding to an actual examination of the dynamic tension between the two ideologies that characterized efforts to promote linguistic and sociocultural rapprochement among the Turkic peoples, to consider the ways in which the imagined parameters of the supranational concept of a post-Cold War era Turkic world intersect with the ways in which the nations that comprise its constituent parts are imagined. In describing the driving ideological force behind efforts aimed at contemporary rapprochement among the Turkic peoples, Winrow (1998) uses the phrase "broader Turkish nationalism" while Landau suggests the term "pan-nationalism," which he describes as "a more intensive or, anyway, *a more comprehensive form of nationalism* [that] aims at promoting the cohesion of people of the same origin, culture, or territory, with the ultimate objection of establishing some sort of political union among them" (1995b:75, emphasis mine). While it is not surprising, given the hegemony of the nation as both the predominant identity construct and basic political unit of the modern age, that both descriptions would define the supranational in terms of the national, I would, nonetheless, argue certain important distinctions between the two constructs. Moreover, I would suggest that while Turkish state and non-state actors may, indeed, have conceived of the Turkic peoples as belonging to the same

nation, in the sense of *ethnie*,[27] and may hence have envisioned relations within the post-Soviet Turkic world as a simple expansion of their own local brand of nationalism with an emphasis on its pan-Turkic undertones, this was a vision often not shared by their Turkic counterparts--a reality that, in turn, speaks volumes regarding the failure of a cohesive Turkic world to coalesce in the post-Cold War era.

As a result, I have chosen to identify the Turkic world as a "supranational" entity, and post-Cold war relations within the putative Turkic world as "supranational," as opposed to "broadly national" or "pan-national," in an attempt to convey the sense of a collective conceptualized as a "whole that is greater than the sum of its parts" in the emergent structural-functionalist Durkheimian sense (1972), for in both historical and contemporary times, the notion of the Turkic world has, for at least some of its proponents, coalesced around the belief that the Turkic peoples' collective survival in the face of aggressive expansionism espoused by neighboring peoples depended on uniting the "natural," "inherent" or "preexistent" Turkic *ethnie* into a federation or confederation of Turkic states that would supply not only "strength *in* numbers," but also *beyond* numbers, by providing the basis for the transformation in sociopolitical consciousness of the Turkic peoples themselves. This, indeed, was the main thrust of the *jadidist* (reformist) movement among the Turkic peoples of imperial Russia in the late nineteenth century (Bennigsen 1985).

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[27] The term *ethnie* is borrowed from the French and defined by Anthony Smith as "named units of population with common ancestry myths and historical memories, elements of shared culture, some link with a historic territory and some measure of solidarity, at least among their elites" (1995:57).

Moreover, my selection of the term "supranational" follows in part from its usage within the field of international relations to refer to organizations--mostly economic or defense-related, but occasionally political in nature[28]--which, by requiring members to give up autonomous decision-making in select domains of joint interest, allows for a "pooling of sovereignty" that thus accords the collective greater influence than could be exercised by any of the member states acting alone (c.f., Gruber 2000). In this sense, I argue, that while Turkish politicians and diplomats were quick to deny any influence from territorial irredentism or political pan-Turkism in the abiding interest they showed toward the Turkic peoples, and, at least ostensibly, eschewed any desire for political union, there nonetheless emerged a palpable sense that any actualization of the notional Turkic world, even if only in activities, such as linguistic rapprochement, that were limited to the sociocultural sphere, would require member states to cede some measure of sovereignty to the collective. That this was, to say the least, a controversial notion will become clear in subsequent chapters. Thus, my selection of the term "supranational" is meant to highlight my argument that the Turkic world is imagined at a level above, or "supra" to, the "nation," in both senses in which the term is commonly used, i.e., to describe an *ethnie*, or non-politicized ethnic group, or to designate a country or sovereign state.

[28] The Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the European Union (EU) offer examples of supranational economic, defense-related, and political organizations respectively.

IMAGINING THE CONTEMPORARY TURKIC WORLD

Having thus described the historical development of nationalism and supranationalism in Turkey and among the Turkic peoples and argued the theoretical distinction between the two ideologies, it may, in this final section, prove useful to compare the imaginative *process* by which the supranational and the national are constituted, with a particular eye for explicating how the contemporary Turkic world has been imagined in ways that are sometimes convergent with and sometimes divergent from conceptualizations of the nation, as a means of elucidating the basis behind the ideological negotiations that lie at the heart of the language ideological debates explored in subsequent chapters. While the notion of a Turkic world provides the framework for the reconceptualization of the diverse Turkic peoples as a broader cohesive entity, this construction is now, as it has been throughout history, based largely on a notional sense of communion, or kinship, rather than tangible, lived connections among the Turkic peoples. In seeking to delimit the dimensions of both the historic and contemporary Turkic world, Benedict Anderson's notion of 'imagined communities" thus proves analytically useful. In his groundbreaking study, Anderson puts forth the proposition that "all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these)" are imagined social entities in which members "will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (1983:6). Arguing that communities are distinguished "by the style in which they are imagined," Anderson identifies three characteristics which he argues collectively define the style of imagining apropos to modern nations:

boundedness, sovereignty and fraternity. He writes: "The nation is imagined as *limited*…[possessing] finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations, …as *sovereign*…[insofar as] nations dream of being free…[and] the gauge and emblem of this freedom is the sovereign state, …and as a *community*…[defined by] a deep, horizontal comradeship…regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail" (1983:7).

Although Anderson's interest lies in the birth of national consciousness from a collection of localized cultural groups situated within a geographically-bounded territory and united through print capitalism, there is nothing inherent to the concept that would gainsay its being applied to the formation of supranational consciousness from a collection of discrete and dispersed cultural groups that transcend national borders yet share a sense of their intrinsic communion. While translocal and transregional groupings undoubtedly preexisted the formation of modern nation-states, it is nonetheless fair to say that the supranational collectives of the modern age have emerged against the backdrop of national imagining and have, as a result, been profoundly influenced by the ideological underpinnings of nationalist thought, even when they hearken back to a pre-nationalist era.

Given the shared ideological roots of nationalist and supranationalist consciousness, it is only natural that certain similarities in the "style of imagining" apropos to the two entities will emerge. Thus, for example, it is not surprising that the Turkic world appears to be conceived of as a "deep horizontal comradeship" in much the same way that nations are envisioned. Indeed, this notion of *fraternity* is evident in

historical depictions of the Turkic world from Gapirali's slogan of "Unity in language, thought, and action," to Atatürk's oft-repeated 1933 description of the Turkic peoples as "brothers of shared origin." Furthermore, a sense of fraternity has likewise pervaded the public discourse of Turkish politicians in the early post-Soviet era, as evident in the ever-present Turkic world slogans which proclaimed the Turkic peoples to be brothers ("*Biz kardeşiz!*"), fellow Turks ("*Biz hep Türküz!*"), and one nation divided into multiple states ("*Bir millet, iki devletimiz!*"). The following quote from a speech delivered by then president Süleyman Demirel at a September 1992 conference entitled "The Past and Present of the Turkic Republics and Turkey" leaves no doubt as to the fact that the Turkic world, at least from the perspective of Turkey's foremost politician at the time, is conceived in fraternal terms:

> [The Turkic] peoples' lullabies, folk songs, and epics are all the same. If these people are not *brothers*, then who is? When we say this, let no one take offense or come to another conclusion.[29] What other conditions could there be for *brotherhood*? We are *brothers* by language, religion, blood and soul.[30] This is not something that can be custom ordered. This is the inheritance bequeathed us by our ancestors (as quoted in Turgut 2001:154, translation and emphasis mine).

[29] Demirel is implying here that the assertion of the inherent "brotherhood" of the Turkic peoples should not be mistaken for pan-Turkism, with its potentially explosive political implications.

[30] The sentence "We are *brothers* by language, religion, blood and soul" has a poetic harmony in Turkish which cannot be duplicated in English. It reads: "*Dili*, *dini*, *kanı*, *canı bir kardeşleriz.*"

In considering Anderson's suggestion that the nation is imagined as a "deep horizontal comradeship," however, it is important to acknowledge scholarly dissent over his disregard for the structural significance of inequality and exploitation operant within its borders. In particular, his theory has been criticized as utopian in the sense that "the imagined version is an idealization, embodying values like fraternity, equality or liberty, which the societies profess [but]… have utterly failed to realise" (Pratt 1987:50). Such critiques are undoubtedly just as relevant to "imagined" supranational communities as they are to national communities, and must therefore be addressed in any attempt at defining the Turkic world, the dimensions of which have clearly been imagined in utopians terms.[31] Indeed, there are strong indications that the actuality of relations between the Turkic peoples does not accord with idealized depictions of the Turkic world as a "community of brothers," which may, in turn, go a long way toward explaining the lack of universal agreement over both the dimensions of the Turkic world and the benefits of coalescing under its rubric.

Writing of the fallacy of "so-called brotherhood" as the foundation for early diplomacy between Turkey and the Turkic republics, Cenk Başlamış notes that the "main mistake of Turkey…[was that it] failed to take [the] initiative with a full programme and with full coordination between state organizations in [its] attempt to establish a 'Turkic world'…. Instead, it tried to reach the target by using such an obscure motto as

[31] One interesting acknowledgement of the utopian nature of notions of the Turkic world can be found in reference to the youth wing of Turkey's ultra-nationalist National Action Party, Grey Wolves (*Bozkurtlar*), whose platform calls for the establishment of greater Turkistan, or Turan and whose members, inspired by the writings of renowned pan-Turkists Ziya Gökalp and Nihal Atsız, have adopted the moniker "idealists" (*ülkücüler*).

"brotherhood of Turks'" (2001:150). Başlamış' critique echoes a larger trend toward national introspection on the part of Turkish politicians, scholars, and journalists seeking to understand the clear preference among the Turkic peoples for national over supranational identification. This discussion of "what went wrong" was ongoing throughout my fieldwork, with contributors suggesting that not only did the notion of a "brotherhood of Turks" raise concerns within the Central Asian republics where pan-Turkism had been discredited as a "bourgeoise" and "racist" ideology by the Soviet state (e.g., Landau 1995b), but also that Ankara's emphasis on "Turkic brotherhood" in its foreign relations with the Turkic republics of Central Asia evoked a sense of "familial hierarchy" which was even more troubling to Central Asian leaders and their publics. As contacts between the governments of Turkey and the Turkic republics, as well as their respective peoples increased, Central Asian statesmen soon began to suspect that implicit within Turkish rhetoric of *kardeşlık* (brotherhood) was the notion of *ağabeylik* (elder brotherhood) and hence the concept of "first among equals"--a concept with which they were all too familiar from Soviet times. This was particularly clear in Turkish politicians' efforts to rally support for the notion that their country might serve as a "model" for democratic development within the Turkic republics (e.g., Mango 1993, Aydın 2003a).

Although the Turkic leaders initially seemed to accept a sense of kinship based on common cultural values between their citizens and those of the Turkish republic, and thus a limited notion of the Turkic world as a "wider ethnic Turkic umbrella" (Winrow 1998:108) and even joined in expressions of kinship with Turkey, particularly when it

served their purposes (Landau 1995b, Winrow 1998, Başlamış 2001), they were nonetheless leery of once again falling prey to the "'elder brother' chauvinistic attitude which presented Russians as the leading ethnic group of the Soviet Union" (Glenn 1999:79). Furthermore, the concept of *ağabeylik* carries the connotation of patronage, or otherwise stated, the expectation that the elder brother will take responsibility for the welfare of the younger brother, assisting him financially and introducing him into the appropriate social networks to ensure his future success. With increased contact between Turkey and the Turkic republics, it quickly became clear that not only had Turkey over-obligated itself financially (Turan and Turan 1998), but also that Ankara's access to and influence within the international community had been overstated. Thus, Ankara's persistent efforts to extend and expand its influence in the region was disproportionate to its means and the promise Turkey represented for leading the Turkic republics toward economic prosperity and Western integration was exaggerated. In response, Turkic leaders reacted against perceived demonstrations of Turkish *ağabeylik* by questioning Ankara's authority and ability to guide their development and expressing their unwillingness to once again play subaltern to a more powerful state (Başlamış 2001, Aydın 2003a). This reaction is best summed up by a catchphrase I often heard repeated: "Russia played the big brother to us more than enough. We have no desire for another big brother" ("*Rusya bize yeterince ağabeylik yaptı. Biz artık ağabey istemiyoruz*").

Thus, although the Turkic world is notionally conceived in utopian terms as a "community of brothers," it has become increasingly clear that this notion of brotherhood is perceived differently by its constituent peoples and hence poses a number of practical

problems as a basis for Turkic rapprochement. Within the putative Turkic world, the term brotherhood raised, by turns, notions of fraternity, but also of racial chauvinism, and of equality, but also familial hierarchy. Such disparities in interpretation, in turn, may serve to explain why attempts at unifying the Turkic peoples, culturally or politically, ran aground as utopian ideals and their pragmatic implications for modern relations were questioned, contested, and reconceived. In the end, however, the notion of brotherhood remains relevant insofar as fraternity, and such related concepts as mutual intelligibility, whether asserted or contested, permeated all aspects of relations within the Turkic world from state-level diplomatic and economic relations to private-sector business deals and academic negotiations over linguistic and orthographic reform.

Despite the entwined nature of the emergence of nationalist and supranationalist ideology, however, it nonetheless stands to reason that in extending a paradigm developed to describe national groupings to supranational groupings, certain differences in the "style of imagining" will emerge. Thus, while the sense of fraternity which lies at the heart of a supranational Turkic identity accords well with Anderson's notion of nationalist imagining, other features Anderson identifies, while still salient, require some reconceptualization when applied to supranationalist imagining. Thus, for example, while supranational groupings, like nations, are undoubtedly *limited* insofar as they are not imagined as "coterminous with mankind" (1983:7) given that they cannot, by definition, be limited by national borders "beyond which lie other nations" (1983:7), other parameters must substitute. In this sense, the defining characteristics of the supranational group imagined on the basis of shared ethnicity, or its component

attributes--language, race, history, religion and culture--which are likewise frequently mobilized singly or in various combinations in the formation of national identity, and which Blommaert and Verschueren (1998) identify as a "feature cluster" underpinning national distinctiveness and separability, must assume the full burden of defining the group and distinguishing the imagined "self" from the imagined "other." Thus, as noted above, although the imagined geographic extent of the Turkic world has remained relatively consistent over the centuries, it is the shared sociocultural attributes of the peoples occupying that geographical expanse, rather than the territory itself, that lie at the heart of conceptualizations of the Turkic world and that, therefore, constitute its limits.

Insofar as I have already suggested that the Turkic world has largely been conceived of as a broad language community, I would, at this juncture, take the opportunity to reinforce this position by pointing to Blommaert and Verschueren's (1998) suggestion that language plays a key role in the national "feature cluster," such that shared language automatically implies all other attributes and, hence, avows nationhood. This presumption, while discovered to be a key feature of European nationalist ideology, nonetheless seems to accord well with the incredible sociocultural diversity extant within the supranational Turkic world in which, for example, the Shi'ite Azerbaijanis, animistic Yakuts, and Christian Gagauz--all marked exceptions from the overwhelming prevalence of Sunni Islam among the Turkic peoples--are nonetheless included by virtue of linguistic pedigree, because, as I was told time and time again: "A Turk is anyone who speaks a language or dialect belonging to the Turkic language family." The perception of

linguistic kinship, then, plays a key role in delineating the limits of the imagined Turkic world as, indeed, shared language defines the bounds of the individual Turkic nations.

Since nationality forms the hegemonic political-ideological system of the modern age in much the same way that religious community and dynastic realm did in centuries past (Anderson 1983), such defining attributes of national consciousness resonate with potential members of an ethnicity-based supranational community who, as citizens of modern nations, are already familiar with their unifying potential. Nonetheless, in aid of fostering supranational consciousness, the attributes chosen to delimit such a supranational collective must be detached from their accepted role in nationalist imagining and imbued with an alternate, albeit parallel, meaning that enables their reconceptualization in the service of imagining a broader supranational identity. In essence, then, I suggest that because national and supranational communities derived from the same broad *ethnie* employ the same attributes as building blocks, these attributes become floating signifiers[32]--in the sense that a single signifier is understood to have multiple or shifting signifieds depending on time, place and the idiosyncrasies of individual perception. As such, these attributes can be invested with differential meaning, thereby allowing them to be rallied in the service both of nationalism and supranationalism.

Thus, in the case of the Turkic world, the possibility exists for prospective members of the putative supranational community to encourage supranational

[32] For a more detailed description of the genesis of the concept of a "floating signifier," please see footnote 117 on page 403.

consciousness by characterizing shared attributes broadly, in order to highlight commonality across difference in service of the supranational ideal, or narrowly, in order to eschew supranational consciousness by highlighting difference across commonality in service of national distinctiveness. In this sense, even the act of naming their national languages, which will discussed at greater length in chapter four, offers the Turkic peoples, as prospective members of the Turkic world, a choice between naming conventions that emphasize similarities--e.g., Azerbaijan Turkish (*Azerbaycan Türkçesi*), Kazakh Turkish (*Qazaq Türkçesi*), and Uzbek Turkish (*O'zbek Türkchesi*)--or highlight differences--e.g., Azerbaijani (*Azerbaycanca*), Kazakh language (*Qazaq tili*), and Uzbek (*O'zbekcha*)--across the supranational collective. In the first set of examples, the Turkic languages are each understood to be subsets of Turkish, thereby suggesting supranational consciousness, whereas in the second series, this connection is elided and the languages appear autonomous, as befits the distinctiveness of individual nations.

Returning now to Anderson's paradigm, it is in the third feature that Anderson identifies as constituent of the style of imagining apropos to modern nation-states, namely *sovereignty*, that the style in which supranational and national communities are imagined most differs. While decision-making power in supranational collectives is delegated to central institutions on defined matters of joint interest and some measure of sovereignty is thus ceded, true sovereignty continues to reside with the independent member nations, as is enshrined in Article two of the United Nations Charter. In this sense, while advocates of a unified Turkic world, both in its historical and contemporary incarnations, have no doubt "dream[t] of [its] being free" (Anderson 1983:7), there have

been only four brief windows during which time the Turkic world might have achieved sovereignty as a (supra)national collective, and sovereignty has proven ever more elusive.

Bennigsen describes the seven months following the overthrow of the czar in the February Revolution of 1917 and just prior to the Bolsheviks' seizure of power in the October Revolution of the same year as the period when the Turkic world came closest to achieving sovereignty. It was during this interlude in governance, when "the wildest dreams of autonomy or even independence were possible" (1985:42), that the All Russian Muslim Congress of May 1917 was convened for the purpose of allowing some 800-900 delegates from throughout the empire to discuss issues of collective identity and address the matter of state administration. Debates pitted the "unionist" camp, led by the Tatars, which advocated cultural autonomy in the form of a single unified Turkic nation (a federation) existing within a centralized Russian state against the "localist" camp, headed up by the Azerbaijanis, which championed the notion of a single Turkic nation composed of several states (a confederation). In the end, the localists prevailed, but an important concession to the notion of a unitary Turkic nation was made in the form of a decision to create a central federal administration that would ensure unity within the Russian Turkic world. The Central National Council (*Milli Merkezi Shura*) and several associated administrative bodies were quickly formed, but these nascent efforts were quashed by the outbreak of the October Revolution which effectively dashed all hopes of political autonomy for the Turkic peoples of Russia for the next seventy odd years.

In addition to this liminal period in the history of the Turkic peoples, Landau (1988) identifies two further lost opportunities for the Turkic world to achieve

sovereignty. He argues that cataclysmic changes wrought by the first and second world wars upset the international order to such an extent that pan-Turkists in Turkey might have been able to realize their irredentist ambitions in the creation of a territorially vast and politically sovereign union of Turkic peoples. Pan-Turkism was very much a part of the political milieu in the Ottoman empire in the years leading up to the outbreak of World War I, and the ruling Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) counted a number of prominent pan-Turkists in their ranks dedicated to the notion of Turkish manifest destiny over the Turkic lands of Central Asia. This vision of creating a sovereign Turkic empire reportedly influenced Ottoman military strategy, resulting in successful engagements on the eastern (Russian) front, but the empire's demise ultimately thwarted any ambitions to territorially unite the Turkic world.

In the aftermath of World War I, pan-Turkism faded in importance as members of the CUP were court-martialed and attention quickly turned to salvaging the nation from partition by the Allied Powers. Victory in the Turkish war of independence and the subsequent establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923 further solidified this trend, and elements of pan-Turkist ideology were co-opted into Turkish nationalist thought, thereby sidelining pan-Turkism (Landau 1995a). Thus, while the outbreak of World War II offered a second opportunity for the creation of a sovereign Turkic world, which pan-Turkists in Turkey sought to capitalize on by "calling loudly for Turkey's intervention in the war, with the declared intent of destroying the Soviet Union, liberating the Turks and creating a far-flung new Turkish state with a vast population" (Landau 1988:3), the Kemalist state abjured. In September 1944, 23 individuals accused of disseminating

racist and pan-Turanist ideas and plotting to overthrow the Turkish government were put on trial for treason (Henderson 1945), effectively spelling the end of political pan-Turkism in Turkey and hence the dream of a sovereign Turkic state.

The progressive disintegration of the Soviet Union beginning in 1989 likewise led certain politically peripheral groups in Turkey and among the Turkic peoples to revive the dream of uniting the Turkic world in a sovereign geopolitical union. For the most part, however, the emphasis on post-Soviet rapprochement among the Turkic peoples has been on "cultural cooperation rather than on political irredentism" (Landau 1995a:4). To a large extent, this is a pragmatic decision. Ankara's first contacts with the Turkic world were circumspect, indicative of a hard-earned respect for Soviet power, and within a relatively short time, and certainly before a consolidated foreign policy toward the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples could be formulated, Turkish officials were faced with the *fait accompli* of independent nations. Even had these fledgling nations been willing to cede their nascent sovereignty for a place in a larger union of Turkic peoples, it is unlikely that the international community, in which race-based politics raises the unpleasant specter of Nazism, would have brooked it.

The notion of a unified, sovereign Turkic world was thus forsaken in the name of sovereignty for its constituent nations, political cooperation, and cultural solidarity--the last of which has itself proved contentious insofar as even the prospect of sociocultural union, pursued first through language and orthography, seemed to demand that the nascent Turkic nations cede some measure of control over these crucial symbolic components of national identity formation. In the end, this proved to be a concession that

they were largely unwilling to countenance, thereby contributing to the failed realization of the Turkic world concept. In this sense, the notion of sovereignty, while more fully actualized in the national context, nonetheless remains important, if only within a more limited scope, to the imagining of the supranational. Moreover, while contestation over issues of sovereignty have been highlighted in accounts of political and economic relations in the post-Cold War era Turkic world and play an important role in linguistic and sociocultural relations, I would nonetheless argue that contestation over sovereignty is largely prefigured by disparities in the ways in which the national and the supranational are imagined as fraternal and limited.

Chapter Three: The Early Turkic Language Congresses: Politics and Ideology in the Quest to Create a Common Turkic Alphabet and *Lingua Franca*

Since the collapse of the bi-polar world, we are forced to rethink a number of topics with which we are faced in this uncertain environment. We begin by approaching them here through the business of alphabet, or *alfabe* (although you could just as easily say *Abece* or *Elifba*)[33]…. We can look at alphabets from the perspective of avenues that open the way to cultural assets. The adoption of an alphabet resembling our own by the Turkish speaking peoples would expand Turkey's cultural field of influence. This is a situation which should be the cause for both celebration and preparation. (*İki kutuplu dünyanın yıkılmasından sonra karşımıza çıkan belirsizlik ortamında birçok konuyu sil baştan yeniden düşünmek zorunda kalıyoruz. Birçok konuya işin alfabesinden (Abece yada Elifba'sından da diyebilirsiniz) başlıyoruz…. Alfabelere kültürel malların üzerinde yol alacakları caddeler gözüyle bakabılırız. Bizimkine benzer bir alfabenin Türkçe konuşan halklar tarafından evrensel olarak kabul edilmesi, Türkiye'nin kültürel etki alanını genişletecektir. Bu sevinilmesi ve hazırlanılması gereken bir durumdur.)*

Haluk Şahin
The Alphabet for the Job (*İşin Alfabesi*)[34]

INTRODUCTION

In 1990-1991, as the Soviet Union teetered on the verge of collapse and the Turkic republics were on the cusp of declaring independence, a series of Turkic linguistic congresses were organized in Turkey which sought to expand the notion of social

[33] *Abece* (phonetic for ABC) is another term for alphabet employed in Turkish. *Elifba* (phonetic for AB) is the Arabic word for "alphabet" employed in many of the Turkic languages of Central Asia and the Caucasus peoples, although some employ the Russian term *алфавит* ("alfavit"). Despite their origins in different languages, *alphabet*, *alfabe*, *elifba*, *abece*, and *alfavit* all derive either from the pronunciation of the first two or three letters of the alphabet or from the names of those letters in the respective languages.

[34] The article from which this quote was taken appeared in *Cumhuriyet* November 27, 1991, p.3.

consolidation through linguistic means from its more traditional role in the nation-building process to a broader function in the service of supranational affiliation, through the formulation of a common Turkic alphabet (*ortak alfabe*) which would serve as the foundation for the creation of a common Turkic language (*ortak dil*) designed to linguistically unite the Turkic peoples. Although the Turkic world had been conceived of as a "linguistic community" for nearly a century, albeit largely *in abstentia* and in the hearts and minds of its transnational and expatriate elite, the political dynamics of the Cold War era had not only prevented contact of any kind between Anatolian Turks and the Soviet Turkic peoples but had also contributed to the development of systemic differences among the Turkic languages that ultimately called into question the very basis for imagining the Turkic world as a language community. The *ortak alfabe* and *ortak dil* projects were thus designed to overcome patent communication divides, bringing the "real" in line with the "ideal" and reconstituting the Turkic peoples as a "proper" language community.

Although the ostensible goal of the paired linguistic projects was thus to improve both written and spoken communication among the various Turkic peoples, and Turkish organizers mostly steered away from issues of a political nature in a deliberate effort to avoid framing linguistic rapprochement as a political enterprise lest the still extant, albeit much diminished, Soviet machine take umbrage or the effort fall victim to infighting bred of disparate political agendas among its participants, the larger political nature of the enterprise was lost on neither the organizers nor the delegates, as emerged in their discourse both directly and indirectly. In this sense, although sociolinguistic research has

long since demonstrated that sharing linguistic form and structure does not necessarily entail a mutual understanding of use conventions, and thus does not a "community" make, the "identification of a language with a people and a consequent diagnosis of peoplehood by the criterion of language" (Woolard 1998:16), is such a powerful construct and so "globally hegemonic" that possession of a shared language is generally perceived as sufficient evidence of status as a distinct ethnic group with the presumed commonalities of descent, history, culture, and religion thereby implied (Bloomaert and Verscheren 1998). Thus, the organizing presupposition of the early linguistic congresses was that standardization of orthographic and linguistic structure among the Turkic languages would allow latent linguistic congruences to emerge thereby clarifying the basis of the Turkic peoples' claim to supranational peoplehood.

THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO THE *ORTAK ALFABE* AND *ORTAK DIL* PROJECTS

From an analytical perspective, the *ortak alfabe* and *ortak dil* projects can be approached in several different ways which, in combination, enable an explication of both the initial objective of linguistic rapprochement and the larger overarching goal of eventual sociocultural, and even geopolitical, union within the Turkic world and thus provide a deeper understanding of the broader dynamics of relations in the post-Soviet era. First, the paired linguistic projects must be situated within complementary academic and activist discourses on language planning and language policy. Within language planning scholarship, the body of research that is most salient to an exploration of the

*ortak alfa*be and *ortak dil* projects takes as its subject what has been dubbed "the 'first congress' phenomenon" in the belief that this "earliest stage of language planning" provides valuable insights into the entire language planning process. Much of the research in this vein is collected in a volume solicited and edited by language planning's foremost figure Joshua Fishman who, in introducing the volume, writes:

> The various models of the language planning flow-chart… all posit a beginning stage at which time no authoritative policy decisions have yet been reached. First congresses pertain to just such a 'pre-natal' or embryonic stage…. It is primarily because of its explicit recognition of this early and formative stage, indeed, perhaps even just the beginning of this earliest stage, that the study of first congresses may constitute a conceptually and strategically worthwhile step ahead in the ongoing efforts to better understand the entire language planning process flow-chart. The decisions and the errors that constitute this stage may long remain to guide and to complicate the subsequent stages of the entire process… (1993a:2-3).

While Fishman's explicit purpose in examining the first congress phenomenon as an entrée to a deeper understanding of later stages of language planning and hence the language planning process as a whole is undoubtedly a worthwhile theoretical endeavor unto itself, there are, as I see it, several ways in which insights derived from the study of first linguistic congresses can be positioned within and thus usefully contribute to broader academic discourses on the nature and social purposes of institutional and oppositional language management and linguistic intervention (Williams 1992, Blommaert 1996). To do so, it is first necessary to identify some areas in which extant literature on language

planning and policy might be undertheorized or too narrowly focused and could thus be usefully expanded upon.

To begin with, I would emphasize that as presently theorized, the study of language planning, and certainly that of first congresses, tends to focus on linguistic purification and standardization efforts organized at the national or subnational stratum. In fairness, this theoretical focus follows from reality, insofar as most language planning efforts and first congresses are themselves organized by state actors in the name of nation-building or national consolidation or by activists representing subnational groups that aspire to ethnic autonomy or recognition as independent "nations." Here we see the influence of the "globally hegemonic" equation of a language with a people on theoretical paradigms (Le Page 1988, Romaine 1989), such that language activists operating within the purview of the nationstate or on behalf of subnational groups, as well as those who study their efforts, conceive of language planning as based in the identity politics of nationhood. As a result, the dynamics of transnational or supranational language planning, based on a concept of peoplehood that transcends national borders, is left unexplored. In this sense, analysis of the early Turkic linguistic congresses offers a hitherto unexamined look at the dynamics of a series of early linguistic congresses aimed at promoting supranational ethnolinguistic, sociocultural, and geopolitical consolidation.

Second, I would suggest that that an approach to first congresses that defines them as the "earliest" stage of language planning tends to presume that there will be subsequent stages, or, put another way, that the "decisions and errors" made at this initial

stage are not so grave as to bring the entire endeavor to an abortive halt. Indeed, if not from a language planning standpoint, then from the broader perspective of linguistic anthropology, the failure of a first congress to achieve its declared aims makes it no less worthy of study than first congresses that succeed in this regard, for if putative success speaks to the social environment that permitted the first congress to reach its objectives, so too failure speaks to the sociocultural, historical and political conditions that mitigated against such objectives being reached.[35] Third, and relatedly, because language planning is a socially embedded practice in which not just language, but also aspects of the social world that are implicitly or explicitly linked through beliefs and attitudes to language, are actively negotiated, I would argue that it is possible for "decisions and errors" made in the earliest phase of language planning to influence not just subsequent stages of the language planning process, but also the course of the ambient sociopolitical dynamics that contributed to this situated (re)examination of linguistic practice and policy. This, then, is true regardless of whether the congress failed to achieve its ostensible goal.

In the following analysis of the early Turkic linguistic congresses, I suggest just that, arguing that not only did the "decisions and errors" that emerged in the discourse of delegates fatally complicate the continuation of any concerted language planning efforts

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[35] Although Fishman does mention the "question of 'success,'" he does so only in the context of tentatively (given the inability to prove causality) establishing a typology that correlates success with "type of first congress sponsorship," noting that whereas nearly all first congresses convened by oppositional nationalists must be counted as successful by some measure, more than half of those organized by governments have "been overtaken by negative events."

to unite the Turkic world[36] and bring a halt to official and explicit linguistic rapprochement,[37] but that these initial misunderstandings and missteps, rather than simply reflecting the fate of subsequent broader efforts toward sociocultural and geopolitical rapprochement with the Turkic world, profoundly influenced their course, direction, and dynamics. While ultimate causality is difficult to prove in an environment characterized by the conjuncture of sociocultural and political upheaval such as marked the realignment of the world order in the aftermath of the Soviet Union's collapse--and I should emphasize that I do not here seek to suggest absolute causality, only robust influence--the study of situated linguistic politics emerging during bounded discursive events set within the context of a major realignment in the ambient sociopolitical milieu nonetheless offers a largely undertheorized, locally salient, micro-level understanding of events that serve to dispute facile social, political, and economic explanations of broader macro-level geopolitical forces. In particular, I suggest that the insights into the relationship between localized linguistic conflicts and broader sociopolitical discourses gleaned from an analysis of the metalinguistic dynamics of the early Turkic linguistic congresses poses a hitherto unprecedented challenge to prevailing explanations, that tend to depict Turkey's

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[36] Although there have been sporadic and scattered continued discussions of creating an *ortak alfabe* and *ortak dil* at various linguistic and Turkic world congresses, conferences, and symposiums, it can no longer be said to be a concerted effort.

[37] Although some measure of de facto linguistic rapprochement has been accomplished through Turkish media, Turkish schools, Turkish businesses, and Turkish government programs to bring exchange students from Central Asia to study in Turkey, the influence is limited and rapprochement is constrained to the Turkic peoples' becoming more familiar with the Turkish spoken in Turkey and thus cannot be said to have brought about the kind of linguistic rapprochement envisioned by the *ortak alfabe* and *ortak dil* projects.

failure to effect the consolidation of the post-Soviet Turkic world in ways initially envisioned as both psychosocially desirable to Turkish ethnonationalist sentiments and politically beneficial to the country's regional image and international prestige, as revolving around a lack of political will or financial wherewithal.

The ability for this earliest stage of language planning to transform aspects of the social environment in which it emerges, whether positively or negatively, is, I argue, largely attributable to the inherently ideological nature of the first language congress which is convened under the presumption that addressing what ails language will ultimately contribute to resolving society's own ills. Although scholarship on this earliest stage of language planning (Fishman 1993c) offers detailed descriptions of the sociopolitical context in which first congresses are convened and the social and political uses to which they are put that implicitly recognize linkages between language and the social world, such scholarship does not generally take an explicitly linguistic ideologies approach, and the specific ways in which language attitudes and beliefs mediate between linguistic usage and broader sociopolitical discourses consequently remains undertheorized. One notable exception, discussed at greater length below, is Errington's (1998) analysis of the First Javanese Language Congress.

Nonetheless, a comparative perspective on first language congresses does lend itself to certain generalizations which ultimately enable Fishman to postulate a broad ideological precept that underpins all first congresses, as indeed it does the early Turkic linguistic congresses. Reexamining the widespread assertion within the language planning literature that language planning is pursued with the aim of resolving

"problems" within a language (e.g., Fishman 1974b, Jernudd and Das Gupta 1971, Weinstein 1980), he writes:

> [With regard to first congresses], it may be desirable to stress that not only are we dealing with languages with self-declared problems but that, in most cases, we are also dealing with *problematic languages* vis-à-vis stronger neighboring languages and that the latter, let us call them Y languages in order to distinguish them from the X languages themselves, although not always *officially* on the agenda of the "First Congress for Language X", are never unrecognizably far in the background, never so far behind the scenes that their problem-causing presence is not felt by one and all… (1993b:334, emphasis in orginal).

Fishman goes on to argue that as a result of the latent focus on Language Y, first language congresses, even if ostensibly convened to address issues of corpus planning within Language X (i.e., prescriptive intervention in the structure of a language that generally takes the form of graphization, standardization, or modernization), are also invariably, if sometimes latently, concerned with status planning (i.e., establishing language status, generally through the allocation of languages to different functional domains of use). In Fishman's own words:

> It is no tautology, therefore, to point out that [first congresses deal with] status planning, even when corpus planning is officially on the agenda, and that [they] are generally among the means by which contextually problematic languages are straining toward societal solutions to the larger-than-language problems that surround them (1993b:335).

Fishman's suggestion that an underlying concern among participants in first congresses with the "Language Y" factor ultimately reframes corpus-related issues as status-related concerns thus opens the way for conceptualizing the problems of linguistic form and structure "faced by language X, its speech community or its authorities" (1993b:334) as perceived problems informed by values, attitudes, and beliefs toward language and language usage which ultimately have more to do with ambient social problems that have been mapped onto language than putative corpus-related problems with the language *per se*. Put another way, in first congresses, we see a projection of ambient identity politics onto linguistic form.

While this apparently universal "Language Y" precept that characterizes first congressed is abundantly evident in the early Turkic linguistic congresses, as will be addressed below, other historically, socioculturally, and politically more specific ideologies of language also emerge in the discourse of delegates and participants, which collectively contribute to an understanding of the specific ways in which the early Turkic linguistic congresses, in attempting to address the "problems" faced by the Turkic languages simultaneously sought resolution of the "larger-than-language problems" that had emerged in the post-Soviet era. In terms of formulating these more specific links between putative linguistic problems and the broader social context of their emergence, work within the field of language ideology offers useful inroads. Within this theoretical perspective, Errington's (1998) study of the First Javanese Language Congress convened during an era of Indonesian national development marked, in particular, by the

"miraculous" development of the Indonesian language as a national *lingua franca* and explicit index of the nationalizing project of the Indonesian state is particularly salient.

Noting the ways in which language development, once considered of "marginal" concern when juxtaposed against such "core" problems of development as technological, political, and economic modernization, is now foregrounded in contemporary ethno-nationalist struggles for autonomy, Errington examines the continuing salience of discourses of development in Indonesia's ongoing nationalizing project within a challenge to the status of the state-sanctified, non-ethnic national *lingua franca* posed by "a concerted, institutional effort to mitigate putatively pernicious side effects of Indonesia's successful development in Javanese linguistic and cultural heritage" (1998:278). In particular, he argues that within the context of state control over linguistic aspects of Indonesian national development, the concluding resolution of the Javanese Language Congress to grant the Department of Education and Culture the mandate to develop a standardized version of the Javanese language appropriate for school instruction brought the ethnic language of the country's colonial nobles and contemporary military, business, and political elite under the aegis of the state and hence positioned it for "a new symbolic role as neotraditional source of legitimacy for New Order goals and decisions" (1998:279). The salience of the Javanese Language Congress, Errington concludes, lies in its occupying and constituting

> …an intermediate space, mediating between the 'individualized, habitual' sphere of talk, on one hand, and 'solemn and higher institutions' of the New Order state,

> on the other. If it offers a convincing *entrée* to broader issues of Development, writ small and large, then it suggests the salience of 'language' for understandings of 'discourse' and the critical study of the ideological framings through which global forces called Development or Modernization impinge on and are mediated in communities and lives (1998:282, emphasis in original).

By exploring the process by which the linguistic ideologies informing institutional language-oriented events serve to link macro-level concerns of institutions to the micro-level concerns of linguistic practitioners and activists, Errington's analysis suggests a useful approach to exploring the influence of overarching sociopolitical discourses on locally situated linguistic politics. From the perspective of the early Turkic linguistic congresses, such an approach provides a means for unpacking broad discourses of nationalism and pan-Turkism by exploring the complexities of their local interpretation as embodied within a series of bounded, yet interlinked, discursive events dealing, explicitly, with language rapprochement and, implicitly, with sociocultural affiliation and geopolitical unification within the post-Soviet Turkic world.

Complementary to scholarship in language ideology that explicitly explores the role of language values, attitudes, and beliefs in mediating between linguistic practice and the social world, as well as to literature pertaining to the social and political nature of language planning, is Harold Schiffman's work on language policy, particularly his concept of "linguistic culture," which while not specifically grounded in the language ideologies perspective, is defined in much the same terms as "the set of behaviors, assumptions, cultural forms, prejudices, folk belief systems, attitudes, stereotypes, ways of thinking about language, and religio-historical circumstances associated with a

particular language" (1998a:5). Schiffman's approach to language policy is theoretically grounded first, in a rejection of the general tendency to equate language policy and language practice (i.e., the assumption that official language policy accurately reflects the reality of on-the-ground linguistic usage) and second, in a belief in the congruence of policy and polity, or the notion that the language policy which applies within any given polity is in keeping with the historical, social and political development of that polity, albeit not in a deterministic Whorfian sense.

In developing his overarching theory that "language policies do not evolve *ex nihilo*; they are not taken off a shelf, dusted off, and plugged into a particular polity; rather they are *cultural constructs*, and are rooted in and evolve from historical elements of many kinds" (1998a:280, emphasis in original), Schiffman notes that "language policy seems to be dichotomized into *overt* (explicit, formalized, *de jure*, codified, manifest) policies and *covert* (implicit, informal, unstated, *de facto*, grass-roots, latent) aspects of the policy" (1998a:13, emphasis in original). Arguing that overt and covert language policies often do not coincide, Schiffman makes specific reference to tsarist Russia, noting that while the *de jure* policy was of "Russian only," the *de facto* situation was quite different. Thus, although the Potemkin illusion of "Russian only" prevailed on the surface, varied applications of the policy abounded (e.g., exemptions granted to the Finnish and Swedish languages, while even more restrictive policies were applied to the Turkic languages) and local deviations from the policy were rampant (e.g., school teachers in Poland taught covertly in Polish while overtly toeing the "Russian only" party line).

Despite shifts in political ideology and linguistic policy, similar rifts in policy and practice appear to have prevailed under Soviet rule, and the subsequent failure of the Soviet language policy seems to reinforce Schiffman's assertion that an overt policy "never succeeds in superseding the underlying ideas about language" (1998a:74). Here, however, I would suggest a more nuanced reading of the effects of linguistic policy on linguistic culture among the Turkic peoples of the former Soviet Union. While agreeing with Schiffman's assessment that *language use* in the former Soviet Union was often at variance with overt policy--although the extent to which this was the case varied from republic to republic and was subject to elite/masses and rural/urban divides--I would suggest that this ought not be taken for evidence of the untouched persistence of local *linguistic culture*.

In short, numerous conversations over many years of fieldwork lead me to argue, that despite the emphasis placed on the "national" languages during the first phase of Soviet linguistic policy, the Central Asian elite chose to send their children to Russian-language schools not only as a result of a pragmatic calculation that knowledge of Russian would provide them better opportunities but also out of a sense that Russian was an "international" and "cultured" language and therefore superior to the local Azerbaijani language--a perspective which rings of contemporary Russian claims, held over from the Soviet era and smacking of unvarnished racism, that the Central Asians had been "civilized" by their introduction to the Russian language.[38] Thus, although many in post-

[38] During stints of fieldwork in rural Azerbaijan in the mid 1990s, where Azeri was the unchallenged mode of communication, I was nonetheless struck by the respect and

Soviet Central Asia now tout the superiority of their eponymous tongues, Russian continues to hold sway as a language of culture even among the younger generations who have had ample opportunity to develop facility in and language loyalty toward their respective national languages.

The more important effect of Soviet linguistic policies on the linguistic culture of the Turkic peoples was, however, in changing local understanding of the role of language planning and overt policy in broader social processes. In short I would argue that Soviet linguistic policy, both overt and covert, eradicated pan-Turkic notions of ethnolinguistic commonality, replacing them, via the nationalities policies, with an ideological belief in the distinctiveness of the republican languages, which had been carefully developed by Soviet linguists to evince maximal distance from one another both linguistically and orthographically (c.f., chapter two). This notion of bounded ethnolinguistic identity contrasted with the pan-Turkic ethnolinguistic consciousness purveyed by Gaspirali's *Tercüman* during the pre-Soviet era, but has nonetheless persisted in the post-Soviet era, despite overt interest in the creation of a pan-Turkic *ortak alfabe*, as evinced in the deep concern of Turkic delegates to the early linguistic congresses over the loss of national linguistic distinctiveness entailed in the creation of a common Turkic alphabet. Here I am reminded of a similar point about the subconscious adoption of dominant language ideologies by those subjected to them made by Alexandra Jaffe in a study of language

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deference shown those who spoke Russian. Even though my Azeri was demonstrably better than my Russian, these individuals were inevitably trotted out to talk with me as an "honored foreign visitor" as if to prove that even in the backwaters they too were "cultured." This point thus proven, we all, my assigned ambassador included, inevitably, and quite relievedly, could revert to speaking Azeri.

politics on Corsica, in which she argues that Corsican language activists, in resisting the linguistic domination of the colonial French language, nonetheless adopted "its structures of value" (1996:23) in championing native language use. Thus, for example, in organizing and introducing the Second Annual Corsican Spelling Contest, Corsican activists sought not only to promote a standardized orthography over regionally-diversified spelling conventions but also to dismantle diglossia by demonstrating the capacity of a largely oral language to function respectably in institutional contexts (e.g., education, media) defined by literacy and hence generally reserved for French as the accepted high language.

Regardless of the question of whether the overt can ever trump the covert, Schiffman's concept of "linguistic culture" as the locus of language policy suggests a means of analyzing the ways in which conflicting language ideologies, or linguistic cultures, within a society--or, extrapolating beyond national borders, between societies--may lead to disagreements concerning language-related issues that ultimately render pragmatic consensus over language policy and use difficult to achieve. Seen from this perspective, it is possible to imagine that the "decisions and errors" of the early Turkic linguistic congresses, rather than simple misjudgments or missteps, may have derived from misalignments in perception and purpose attributable to divergent language ideologies, or the different linguistic cultures of Turkey and the Turkic republics, which became explicit, even if not always explicitly recognized, upon coming into contact, and hence conflict, in the context of attempts at establishing an *ortak alfabe* and *ortak dil*.

More broadly, then, the early linguistic congresses represent organized instances of first linguistic contact, indeed some of the first quasi-official contact of any kind, between the Turkish people and the Turkic peoples of the then soon-to-be-former Soviet Union. Language contact has long been a topic of particular interest within the fields of linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics where investigations of the dynamics of linguistic contact, particularly in multilingual communities in which struggles over identity politics are enacted through language, have demonstrated the salience of language values, attitudes, and beliefs by exploring the specific ways in which they are linked to broader social and political constructs, including, most notably, notions of ethnicity and nationalism (e.g., Woolard 1989a).

More recent scholarship has positioned language contact within a language ideologies perspective, demonstrating the ways in which language is not only transformed by, but also transforms social relations (Silverstein 1998) and how changes in "linguistic structures, practices, and values" reflect, reinforce, and potentially revolutionize "presuppositions about social relations and social relations themselves" (Makihara and Schieffelin 2007:5). In introducing a volume dedicated to investigating the effects of various forms of cross-cultural, often global, social contact on languages and their respective speakers in the Pacific islands from a language ideologies perspective, Makihara and Schieffelin argue that "processes of historical change have shaped and been shaped by linguistic ideologies" which she defines as "reflexive sensibilities about languages and language use, held by [native] peoples themselves" (2007:4). They go on to suggest that linguistic ideologies are particularly developed in

the Pacific islands not only because language is an especially salient construct, playing a central role in the construction of self and the social world through the negotiation and maintenance of political and interpersonal relationships, but also by virtue of the extraordinary diversity of languages within the societies that comprise the Pacific islands, bringing languages, linguistic traditions, and language ideologies into continuous contact and frequent conflict. The Pacific islands thus constitute a rich site for the study of language ideologies and sociocultural transformations, for, as Makihara and Schieffelin argue:

> Contexts in which language ideologies are in conflict often give rise to a higher degree of explicitness about underlying views and beliefs. These are also the sites in which language ideologies are recalled or produced, made visible and audible, and their naturalness questioned, bringing us to what Giddens (1984) would call "discursive consciousness." This is where processes of reconfiguration are often initiated (2007:15-16).

Although the recent history of the Turkic world is defined more by *lack* of contact, linguistic or otherwise, than by the density of continuous linguistic contact that characterizes Pacific island communities, I would suggest that language nonetheless constitutes a "core value" (Smolicz 1979) in the imagination of the Turkic world--a belief in linguistic kinship being the primary means by which the notion of a great supranational collective of Turkic peoples survived for decades in the absence of social intercourse (c.f., chapter two). Furthermore, I suggest that it is this decades-long gap in relations, which mitigates against any gradual mediation of divergent linguistic ideologies,

combined with a presumption, born of the absence of contact, that shared language attitudes of the past remain unchanged, that renders the early linguistic congresses such a potent site for studying the sociopolitical ramifications of conflicts in language ideology.

In short, contact, whether of the sustained, centuries-long type observed in the Pacific islands, or the focused, event-driven type seen in the early Turkic linguistic congresses, brings language ideologies into conflict, making them explicit in ways that are generally masked in the absence of contact. In this sense, the *Birinci Türk Dili Kurultayı* (First Turkish Language Congress) hereafter FTLC, the *Milletlerarası Çağdaş Türk Alfabeleri Sempozyumu* (International Contemporary Turkish Alphabets Symposium) hereafter ICTAS, and the *Sürekli Türk Dili Kurultayı* (Permanent Turkish Language Congress), hereafter PTLC, were instrumental not only in bringing together Turkish scholars and their Turkic counterparts for the purposes of creating an *ortak alfabe* and an *ortak dil* which was to pave the way for the eventual sociocultural and/or geopolitical unification of the Turkic world, but also in revealing differing approaches to language and orthography and conflicting understandings of their role in social consolidation, thereby creating the conditions by which the realization of a great ethnolinguistic, sociocultural, and geopolitical union of Turkic peoples envisioned by congress organizers and participants was ultimately precluded. Seen from this perspective, it is possible to imagine that the "decisions and errors" of these early linguistic congresses, rather than representing simple misjudgments or missteps, may have been derivative of misalignments in perception and purpose attributable to divergent language ideologies, or different linguistic cultures, which upon coming into contact and

conflict and are hence made explicit, even if not explicitly recognized within the context of their emergence.

OVERVIEW OF THE EARLY LINGUISTIC CONGRESSES OF THE POST-SOVIET TURKIC WORLD

By 1989, the rapid opening of the Soviet Union under the twin policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika*[39] allowed for renewed contact between the Turks of Turkey and the Turkic peoples of Central Asia, the Caucasus, and other regions of the U.S.S.R. for the first time in over seventy years. In addition to enabling the cautious resumption of political, economic, and diplomatic relations between the Anatolian Turks and their Soviet Turkic cousins, this era of openness once again presented the opportunity for both sides to entertain the notion of sociocultural unification of Turkic peoples under the rubric of the "Turkic world." Language once more became a key aspect of sociocultural rapprochement, and linguistic divergences among the Turkic languages, which emerged at first contact and presented as patent barriers to effective communication, seemed to

[39] *Glasnost* is translated from the Russian as "openness." It refers to a new government policy of transparency instituted by then General Secretary of the Communist Party and de facto leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, in an attempt to rein in endemic corruption within the top echelons of the Communist Party and Soviet government. Because it resulted in a decline in censorship, it is often popularly associated with freedom of speech. *Perestroika* is translated from the Russian as "restructuring" and refers to the reorganization of the Soviet political and economic system introduced by Gorbachev and often identified as a main contributing factor to the collapse of communism.

render linguistic unification a key precursor to greater cultural and political rapprochement.

While the Turkish Language Society (Türk Dil Kurumu, TDK) with its official mandate to regulate the Turkish language and support linguistic research on Turkish and the Turkic languages would have seemed the obvious choice to take the lead in negotiating matters of linguistic rapprochement with the Turkic peoples, it was actually the Ministry of Culture that seized the initiative, thereby further emphasizing the broader sociocultural dimensions of the *ortak alfabe* and *ortak dil* projects. In September 1990, declaring that as an "organization with good intentions" (*"iyi niyetli bir organizasyon"*) it was taking up an issue which had long been a point of interest and great debate within the social life of the nation, Turkey's Ministry of Culture convened the *Birinci Türk Dili Kurultayı* (FTLC) with the stated aim of fostering discussion over the "Turkish language and related issues" (*"Türk dili ve meseleleri"*).[40]

As the first of the three early linguistic congresses, the First Turkish Language Congress set the tone for future events by revealing the ways in which assumptions about language and orthography revealed through the metalinguistic discourses of its organizers and participants were ideologically linked to social constructs that reflected broader ambient discourses about the Turkic world then current within Turkey. Forty-one Turcologists and language experts from 37 Turkic regions were invited to join roughly 450 Turkish participants at the congress in Ankara. Only nine of the Turkic invitees

[40] The article from which these quotes were taken appeared in *Millî Kültür* November 1990, No.78, p.2.

accepted, however, due, it seems, to the chaos of the era and an understandable reticence among some invitees who, having long endured the suspicion of the Soviet authorities for their interest in Turcology, later privately admitted an understandable concern over the potential ramifications of attending a Turcology congress in Turkey while the future of the Soviet Union remained uncertain.

Although a good portion of the congress was devoted to issues related exclusively to Turkish, the Turkic peoples and their languages were spotlighted to a far greater degree than during the congress on the Turkish language convened in 1932 and also dubbed the First Turkish Language Congress (c.f., chapter two). My focus here is on the "Turkic world" aspect of the congress. Declaring in his opening address, that the Turkic world faced a "happy problem, fortunate affair" ("*mutlu sorun – mesut mesele"*), Minster of Culture Namik Kemal Zeybek defined the "happy" side of the conundrum as the opportunity afforded by developments in the Soviet Union to establish relations with the Turkish-speaking peoples, while suggesting that its "problematic" aspect sprang from the unwelcome discovery that current systemic differences in alphabet and writing posed a considerable impediment to communication amongst the Turkic peoples. The "problem" that necessitated language planning was thus identified as disparities in orthographic usage among the Turkic peoples which masked the mutual intelligibility of the "Turkish language" ("*Türkçe*") and the FTLC was thus cast as the first step toward resolving this problem and linguistically unifying the Turkic peoples.

It is important here to emphasize that in this initial foray at characterizing the linguistic milieu of the post-Soviet era, as befit the title under which the congress was

convened, Minister Zeybek cast the many Turkic languages spoken throughout the Turkic world as a single language--which he referred to by the name given the language spoken in modern-day Turkey, i.e., Turkish (*Türkçe*)--rather than a family of related Turkic languages (*Türk dilleri)*. The implication of this discursive choice was that the Turkic languages, much like the vernaculars of Turkey itself, were simply dialects of modern standard Turkish, with all the assumptions of authenticity, originality, authority, and primacy of the Turkish language thus entailed. Although the import of Zeybek's lexical choice was not to become clear until after the early linguistic congresses, and will thus be addressed in the following chapter, I mention it now because this early quasi-official characterization of their languages was to become a major grievance among the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples, by whom it was perceived as not simply a linguistic estimation, but also a social and political assessment, and hence constitute one of "decisions and errors" that ultimately resulted in the failure marked of the early linguistic congresses to effect linguistic rapprochement in the post-Soviet era.

Aside from broadly identifying the issues of particular import in effecting linguistic rapprochement within the Turkic world and establishing commissions charged with investigating these issues--e.g., *Türk Dünyasında Alfabe, İmla, Yazı Dili Meseleleri* (Issues of Alphabet, Spelling, and Written Language in the Turkic World), *Terim Meseleleri* (Issues of Terminology), *Türkçenin Araştırılması Meselesi* (Issues of Researching Turkish)--little in the way of actual language planning was accomplished during the FTLC. Nonetheless, this initial post-Soviet Turkic linguistic congress was instrumental in setting the stage for subsequent discourse about language, orthography,

and the politics of identity in the post-Soviet Turkic world, in which issues of mutual intelligibility first implied in Minister Zeybek's opening remarks were to figure centrally.

The following year, the Turcology Research Institute (*Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü*) at Marmara University in Istanbul convened the *Milletlerarası Çağdaş Türk Alfabeleri Sempozyumu* (ICTAS). From 18-20 November 1991, language professionals, including linguists, literature professors, writers, and literary critics, from each of the Turkic republics and many of the autonomous regions were invited to collaborate with Turkish counterparts in an initiative aimed at creating a common alphabet. Twenty eight representatives of the Turkic republics and Turkic peoples[41] participated in four sessions each hosted by a Turkish linguist. The participants in each session presented communiqués on issues associated with alphabet in the Turkic world, after which the floor was opened to discussion.

By restricting participation to language professionals, the symposium maintained a more rigorous academic tone which, in conjunction with its smaller size, ultimately fostered greater interaction and discussion amongst the delegates. Paper presentations focused on the individual phonological characteristics of the many Turkic languages and the specific injury they had suffered from the imposition of an alphabet inadequate to represent their full phonological range. The relative merits of various orthographic systems and their capacity to serve as a base for a common Turkic alphabet were debated,

[41] The Turkic republics are: Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The Turkic peoples are ethnically Turkic peoples who live under the auspices of a larger state, in this case, generally Russia or Soviet successor states--e.g., Gagauz, Tatars, Bashkurds, Chuvash, Ahıska, etc.

and several specific orthographic proposals were presented and discussed. At the conclusion of the symposium, a vote was held on the adoption of a common alphabet and a decision on its proposed format reached. Throughout the, presentations and follow-on discussions among delegates revealed many shared ideological assumptions about the nature of language and linguistic rapprochement, however differences of opinion also emerged, offering insight into several issues that not only bedeviled the *ortak alfabe* and *ortak dil* projects themselves but also foreshadowed difficulties encountered in broader efforts to unite the Turkic world culturally and politically.

Of the three early linguistic congresses, ICTAS is, moreover, the one that most recalled an earlier watershed moment in the history of linguistic pan-Turkism, the 1926 Baku Turcology Congress, not simply due to its professionally restricted attendance and greater representation from the Turkic peoples, but also by virtue of the general tenor of debate and the clear commitment among the delegates to achieving tangible results. In three days of discussion, its organizers and participants, like those to the 1926 Baku Congress, sought to take the initial steps toward linguistic unity by establishing the need for a common alphabet, choosing the orthographic system upon which it would be based, and deciding the form it would take. The symposium was hailed as a seminal moment in the linguistic unification of the Turkic people and widely reported on in the press, including the Turkish nationalist daily, *Tercüman*, which, in an article by Bekir Türkmenoğlu that recalled Turkic reformer Ismail Gaspirali's efforts to unite the Turkic world through a turn-of-the century newspaper of the same name published under the banner "Unity in language, thought, and action" (*"Dilde, fikirde, işte birlik"*) (c.f.,

chapter two), heralded the imminent achievement of Gaspirali's goals declaring: "The Turkic world experienced an historic day. The ideal of unity in language, action, and thought is at last materializing" ("*Türk Dünyası, tarihî bir gün yaşadı. Dilde, işde, fikirde birlik ulküsü artık gerçekleşiyor*").[42]

Six months later, the Ministry of Culture, seeking to capitalize on the momentum achieved by ICTAS, convened roughly 1000--predominantly Turkish--linguists, literary figures, and politicians for the *Sürekli Türk Dili Kurultayı* (PTLC). Held in Ankara from 4-8 May 1992, the declared aim of the PTLC was to continue the work begun at ICTAS and ensure further progress toward a common alphabet and Turkic *lingua franca* by "researching issues of alphabet, spelling, and the written [form] of the Turkish language in the republics of Turkic origin and Turkic societies, seeking paths toward a common solution, and taking decisions that [would] create a program to delineate the topic." Curiously, or perhaps tellingly of the by then already fractured consciousness of the Turkic world, despite the formal dissolution of the Soviet Union and recognized independence of its former vassal states in Central Asia, representation from the Turkic world remained relatively sparse. Opening statements were followed by presentations from "foreign" (Turkic) and "local" (Turkish) invited speakers after which the floor was opened to comment from guests and local attendees. The final three sessions were devoted to reports from the Alphabet, Spelling, and Written Language Commissions, established during the FTLC, after which the floor was again opened to comment from

[42] The article appeared in *Tercüman,* November 19, 1991, p.1.

guests and local participants, closing remarks were made and a summary of the congress's findings presented to those in attendance.

Despite differences in size, attendance, and format, these three congresses collectively represent the initial push toward supranational linguistic unification among the Turkic peoples. Thus, although the following analysis will largely focus on ICTAS, as the most substantive and interactive of the congresses, I seek to weave insights gleaned from an examination of relevant metalinguistic discourses emerging from the other two congresses, as well as media discourses surrounding the events, into an analytical narrative that explores the dynamic tension between Turkish/Turkic nationalism and pan-Turkic supranationalism, which colored the dimensions of the overarching debate over the creation of a common Turkic alphabet and *lingua franca* and ultimately constrained the ability of the *ortak alfabe* and *ortak dil* projects to unite the Turkic peoples either linguistically or sociopolitically.

TRANSCRIPTION AS PROCESS AND PRODUCT

Before proceeding to an analysis of the enabling presuppositions that informed the early language congresses and the conflicts in linguistic ideology that emerged during these early instances of metalinguistic contact within the Turkic world, it is perhaps useful to first mention some key issues regarding the discursive data to be analyzed. To begin with, it is important to note that despite my very best efforts, I was unable to obtain recordings of the proceedings of the congresses--they appear no longer to exist. As a

result, the analysis of language ideologies emerging from delegate discourse that follows is based largely on transcripts of the proceedings compiled along with supplementary material and published as proceedings booklets, augmented, in turn, by newspaper and journal report of the events, personal interviews and informal discussions with many of the delegates and attendees, participant observation at later Turkic world and linguistic congresses in which the issue of linguistic rapprochement and revised proposals for an *ortak alfabe* and *ortak dil* were suggested, historical research, and a deep, if somewhat ineffable, "lived sense" of the subject developed over years of regularly attending to issues of language and orthography within the Turkic world. Nonetheless, since the mainstay of discursive analysis lies in transcribing naturally occurring discourse from audio recordings and analyzing the specific forms it takes, the lack of an audio recording presents certain analytical challenges.

This however, is the hazard of analyzing historical discursive events. As Makihara and Schieffelin remark in reference to the linguistic specificities of historically salient moments of contact: "The role of language and the forms it takes, though central to cross-cultural contact situations is rarely written about and remains undertheorized. Historical accounts, for example, often are vague about verbal interactions, failing to indicate languages used in contact moments, much less what might have been said or heard when partially shared languages were used to establish rudimentary forms of communication" (2007:5). In this sense, the existence of transcripts of the proceedings that include not just the text of prepared presentations, but also the extemporaneous discourse of open discussion during these transformative moments of first contact, albeit

of the "everyday" type that might be produced in court or other discursive institutional settings rather than the "academic" type suitable to scholarly analysis, should be counted as extremely fortuitous, although it may not seem so in an age of YouTube and cellphones with built-in video recording capacity that have radically democratized control over the technological means of capturing and sharing live audio and video in the years since the congresses were convened. In the end, I have decided that despite the loss of detail that could have been gleaned from a closer analysis of the actual discursive dynamics had audio recordings of the events been available, there remains great benefit to be gained in terms of understanding the dynamics of these first moments of organized discursive contact within the post-Soviet Turkic world from an analysis of even just the propositional content of discourse emerging within the early Turkic linguistic congresses.

Moreover, while the lack of a transcript suitable to a more detailed analysis of discursive dynamics closes some avenues of investigation, it simultaneously opens others. Although I did not personally transcribe the audio recordings of the congresses, it is important to note that they *were*, in fact, transcribed. That, in itself, is instructive of the value placed on the event by its organizers, who, at the very least, clearly thought it advisable to produce a record of this presumably transformative moment in the history of the Turkic world for posterity. Furthermore, there is much in the way of parsing the ideological presuppositions that informed the congresses to be gleaned from the *manner* in which the events were transcribed. Elinor Ochs first explicated the ideological nature of the transcription process in a 1979 article in which she suggests that "transcription is a selective process reflecting theoretical goals and definitions" (1979:44). Although her

essay primarily serves as an injunction to researchers who base their analysis and theoretical conclusions on naturalistic speech behavior rather than on native-speaker intuition concerning language use to pay close attention to the transcription process and make clear the basis for the selectivity they necessarily impose, by revealing the ways in which the transcription process embodies the ideological assumptions of the researcher, Ochs' theoretical approach to the transcription process, as well as the expanded paradigms offered in more recent scholarship (Jaffe 2007, Bucholtz 2007, Hammersley 2010), offer a constructive means of thinking about the transcription process in general and the ways in which it creates an authoritative discursive text that "frames" interaction (Goffman 1974) and ultimately defines a discursive event in ways that are useful to the transcriber.

Thus, although Ochs' focus is thus on the processural side of transcription, for present purposes, I would emphasize the socially constructed product of the transcription process. Viewing the transcripts of the early Turkic linguistic congresses from this perspective, they become "texts" embodying important ideological assumptions which, insofar as transcription was undertaken by the organizers or under their auspices, speak volumes about their intent in convening the congresses and the ultimate aims they hoped to achieve. I am here reminded of Makihara and Schieffelin's directive that "[t]he inherent complexity of communication in cross-cultural encounters must be kept in mind as we investigate the different interpretive strategies, translation conventions, and encoding procedures as well as the broader language ideologies which may converge in moments of contact" (2007:6). Although Makihara and Schieffelin were referring

specifically to the strategies, conventions, and procedures employed at the moment of linguistic contact, I would argue that it applies equally to the production of written records of those moments of contact. In this sense, the apparent destruction of audio recordings of the early linguistic congresses with the publication of the congress proceedings allows for the establishment of definitive narratives of the events and effectively eliminates the possibility for disparate or oppositional readings of the event. Nonetheless, insofar as the "frame" thus imposed on the early linguistic congresses by their respective organizers were subsequent to their conclusion, I will follow suit and reserve analysis of the congress proceedings as "text" until after examining the metadiscursive dynamics of the congresses themselves.

PAN-TURKIC LINGUISTIC CULTURE AND THE "MYTH" OF MUTUAL INTELLIGIBILITY: THE IDEOLOGICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF LINGUISTIC COMMONALITY

Although the extant literature in language planning is restricted in scope to examining efforts at the national or sub-national level and hence provides no sure guide for parsing the odd supranational language planning initiative, a careful reading of the discourse surrounding and emerging from the early linguistic congresses suggests, I would argue, that attempts at linguistic standardization or unification within a kindred group whose respective languages, while belonging to the same linguistic family, nonetheless exhibit significant divergence, are necessarily based first and foremost on simultaneous adherence to two seemingly opposing propositions--a deep-seated

ideological belief in the fundamental kinship of the languages in question coupled with a pragmatic recognition of the existence of superficial, or even systemic, differences that hinder communication. Taken together, these two propositions revolve around perceptions of mutual intelligibility, on the one hand explicit and on the other latent. As such, efforts toward creating a common alphabet and *lingua franca* across the post-Soviet Turkic world were premised on a shared hegemonic belief in a common linguistic root which persisted in the face of general acknowledgment of the difficulties in communication that necessitated linguistic and orthographic reform. In this sense, the notion of mutual intelligibility serves both an enabling presupposition of the early Turkic linguistic congresses and a "problem" to be resolved by them. By contrast the "problem" to be addressed in national or subnational language planning efforts generally revolves around asserting difference rather than claiming commonality.

Mutual intelligibility is an inherently subjective, and hence slippery, concept, perceptions of which often fail to accord with actual lived experience, rendering it particularly given to interpretation, negotiation or overt manipulation. John Gumperz addresses this point in describing the link between social sensibility and the assertion or denial of mutual intelligibility that often manifests as language loyalty. He writes: "The conflict in language loyalty may even affect mutual intelligibility, as when speakers' claims that they do not understand each other reflect primarily social attitudes rather than linguistic fact. In other cases, serious linguistic differences may be disregarded when minority speakers pay language loyalty to a standard markedly different from their own vernacular" (Gumperz 1971:124).

Despite indisputable linguistic similarities that justify the Turkic languages' categorization as a family of languages, academic disagreement persists over the degree to which the Turkic languages and dialects were ever mutually intelligible during the modern age. Most serious scholarship has suggested that the geographic isolation of this ethnically-related peoples divided by great mountain ranges and vast steppes was reflected in the development of immense diversity amongst their languages which prevented easy communication. In his history of the Soviet Turkic peoples, Olaf Caroe argues that by the early twentieth century, the eastern Turkic languages spoken in Central Asia were already sufficiently divergent to hamper communication. He writes: "In speech the difference is great enough to cause difficulty of understanding between even native speakers… [thereby rendering] the path of the reformer seeking to establish one language as current coin for all Turkistan… [not] so easy as has often been suggested." (1967:221 as quoted in Fierman 1991a:70). Such claims clearly resonate with Gaspirali's late eighteenth/early nineteenth-century efforts to foster a common language amongst the Turkic peoples which were premised on the principle that while the Turkic intelligentsia were able to communicate across linguistic divides using the Common Language (*Lisan-ı umumî*) employed in *Tercüman* (Landau 1995a), linguistic divergence had largely robbed common persons of Turkic ethnic background of the ability to understand one another.

Although largely in agreement with Caroe's assertions regarding divergence in the spoken languages of pre-Soviet Turkistan, William Fierman nonetheless suggests that distance between written languages was not as wide, noting that patent dialectical differences were partially obfuscated in writing by use of the Arabic script. He argues

that although the Arabic letters created ambiguities and redundancies when applied to the Turkic languages, making it more difficult to learn to read and write, "[b]ecause vowel sounds varied considerably from dialect to dialect, the ambiguity served to unify Turkic dialects… [and] reinforced the cultural and linguistic unity both among the Turks and between the Turks and the Arab and Persian worlds" (1991a:59). In essence, Fierman suggests the existence of two separate, but interrelated and often conflated, aspects of mutual intelligibility--written and spoken--and argues that a shared alphabet, particularly one that elides phonetic differences between related languages and dialects, serves to enhance ease of communication and social cohesion even across patent linguistic divides.

Whether superficial or systemic, what distinctions amongst the Turkic languages and concomitant difficulties in spoken and written communication existed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, were amplified during the Soviet era, as detailed in chapter two. With respect to spoken language, this was accomplished through "nationalization" of the Turkic languages of Central Asia, which standardized local dialects within a defined geographic span into distinct languages in aid of creating distinct nationalities. In terms of written language this was accomplished, largely through implementation of first the Latin and then the Cyrillic orthography, both of which, by marking vowels where the Arabic alphabet had not, emphasized phonetic differences between the languages. Thus, for example, the word for "world" became *dünya* in Azeri, *dunyo* in Uzbek, *düniye* in Kazakh and *dön'ya* in Tatar. The introduction of different Cyrillic alphabets for each of the Turkic languages further served to separate them, particularly after each of the republic alphabets had been revised several times.

The success of Soviet language planning in deepening what orthographic and linguistic differences did exist among the Turkic languages was especially evident in the early years of post-Soviet Turkic rapprochement, as suggested by the many anecdotes circulating at the time that detailed misunderstandings based on lexical or orthographic divergences. One oft-repeated such sketch, which recounts an Azerbaijani man's visit to Uzbekistan during the Soviet era, is particularly illustrative of the divisive effects of incompatible alphabets on mutual intelligibility amongst the Turkic peoples. At the time of the Azeri man's visit, the U.S.S.R. was gearing up for a holiday and a banner had been hung from the main government building which read: "Communism is the main principle." The Azeri was reportedly confused by the banner because the word for "main" had been spelled in proper Uzbek as *boş* instead of *baş*, as it was spelled in Azeri. Given that *boş* means "empty, meaningless" in Azeri, this minor difference in vowels changed the meaning entirely for the Azeri visitor who read the message: "Communism is a meaningless principle."

Mutual intelligibility not only among the Turkic languages but also between those languages and Anatolian Turkish was also compromised by Soviet linguistic policies which "nationalized" the republic languages, russified their lexicons, and imposed Cyrillic-based alphabets once Ankara had embraced a Latin-based orthography. On the other side of the Iron Curtain, Turkish linguistic reforms likewise widened the gap with the Turkic languages first through the adoption of a national alphabet, which, while similar to the Unified Turkic Alphabet (*Birləşdirilmiş Jeni Tyrk Əlifbasь*) in use among the Turkic peoples until the late 1930s, nonetheless differed in key aspects, and then

through language reform, particularly the invention of neologisms and adoption of Western loanwords for Arabic and Persian loanwords commonly used across the Turkic languages. As such, communicative difficulties and misunderstandings during the early years of rapprochement within the Turkic world were especially pronounced in interactions between Anatolian and Central Asian Turks, and nearly every Turk, when asked, could cite at least one example of a humorous or discomforting misunderstanding resulting from an attempt to communicate across the Turkic languages.

Many such anecdotes were repeated so often that they eventually entered the public lexicon to be recounted by individuals with no personal experience of the communicative gaffe they described. Thus, one of the more common stories involved a Turkish passenger traveling to Baku aboard Azerbaijan Airlines who became mistakenly alarmed that the plane was about to crash when the stewardess calmly announced that passengers should prepare for landing, using the word *düşmek*, meaning "to descend, land, or alight" in Azeri but "to fall" in Turkish. Another, more apocryphal but similarly favorite, anecdote involves an Azeri man who, when asked about his profession, replies that he manages a *karxana* (meaning "factory, mill, workshop" in Azeri, but sounding homologous to the Turkish word *kerhane* meaning "brothel") where his wife and daughter are also employed. A variation of the story has the Azeri man being asked about the profession of his parents, to which he replies that his father manages a *karxana* where his mother is likewise employed.

Despite verging on urban legends, such anecdotes are nonetheless telling of sociolinguistic attitudes revolving around the issue of mutual intelligibility. While it

would be absurd to suggest that these amusing vignettes, involving the small matter of homonyms and non-homologous vowels, called into question the mutual intelligibility of the Turkic languages any more than it would make sense, as many Turks have pointed out, to claim that differences in the meaning of the slang term "fag" should be taken as evidence that American and British English are not mutually intelligible, they are nonetheless instructive not simply because they point to differences in the Turkic languages which harbor the potential for misinterpretation and confusion, but because these communicative difficulties arise precisely as a result of expectations of seamless mutual intelligibility. In short, miscommunications of this type are noteworthy for breaking the frame, thereby introducing the jolt of a sudden heterodoxic recognition of difference to an otherwise prevailing doxic sense of similarity (Bourdieu 1977).

Regardless of scholarly dissent over the actual degree of mutual intelligibility and contemporaneous evidence of patent difficulties in communication, the romantic belief in mutual intelligibility across the Turkic languages nonetheless possessed strong popular appeal and permeated Turkish public discourse on the Turkic world during the early years of rapprochement. On a personal note, my first fieldworks trips to Turkey were punctuated by friends, acquaintances, and complete strangers from all walks of life assuring me, in terms borrowed from the political rhetoric of the time, that the Turkic languages were sufficiently similar to allow one to travel from the Adriatic Sea to the Great Wall of China on Turkish alone. Although I frequently questioned such assertions, citing my own experience of the Turkic languages and that of fellow linguists and other professional contacts who had spent time in Central Asia, I rarely succeeded in shaking

my interlocutors' faith in mutual intelligibility across the Turkic languages. At most, they would concede that the "accent" took a little "getting used to," but invariably insist that the languages were no more different than American and British English. I often pointedly countered with an account of my father's experience asking for driving directions while on vacation in Wales, emphasizing the trouble locals had comprehending his questions and the equal difficulty he had understanding their answers, despite the fact that both parties were speaking English, but this too had little effect in dampening confidence in the imagined reality of linguistic homogeneity across the Turkic world.

Among Turks with more direct experience in the Turkic world and/or a more sophisticated understanding of language, this romantic belief in the mutual intelligibility of the Turkic languages was likewise evident, but appeared based not on actual ease of communication, but rather a sense of deep familiarity that superseded patent communicative difficulties. One Turkish writer described this sense of the Turkic languages as follows:

> The sounds of speech, the cadence and manner of speaking, it all sounds terribly familiar to me at a primal level, as if I've heard it in the distant past or in a dream, as if the words are coming to me on the wind and every third word rings clear as a bell. Despite all my straining, I can't quite make out the rest, and yet I have the sense that I *could* understand if I simply set my mind to it.[43]

The sense of mutual intelligibility across the Turkic languages persisted in even more rarefied form among Turkish linguists and language professionals, who appeared to

[43] Interview with the writer on December 28, 2000.

base their assertions of mutual intelligibility on expert assessments of linguistic distance rather than actual ease of communication in speech or writing. In discussing mutual intelligibility among the Turkic languages, linguists and Turkologists pointed to systematic phonological variations between the Turkic languages, such as shifts between voiced and unvoiced consonants (e.g., *dil* vs. *til*) and between bilabials (e.g., *ben* vs. *men*), or the reversal of order in common consonant clusters (*köprü* vs. *körpü*). Such variation, while understood to hamper communication, was nonetheless offered as evidence of the Turkic languages' diffusion from a common linguistic root. This sense of linguistic proximity furthermore offered grounds for the belief among linguists and other language professionals that careful language planning involving reforming and unifying the alphabet as well as standardizing lexical inventory and meaning across languages--beginning with the elimination of long-standing borrowings from Arabic and Persian as well as more recent loans from Russian and the Western languages--could bridge the distance between the Turkic languages and restore full mutual intelligibility.

MUTUAL INTELLIGIBILITY AND THE IDEOLOGICAL FRAMING OF SUPRANATIONAL LINGUISTIC UNIFICATION

Given the prevalence with which the perceived existence of mutual intelligibility across the Turkic languages was asserted within the public sphere and among language professionals, it was only natural that such assumptions should inform official discourse framing the early linguistic congresses. Indeed, in the opening statement at the First

Turkish Language Congress, head of the Ministry of Culture's Publications Department, Alâeddin Korkmaz, spoke to this very point:

> Millî kimliğimizin başlıca ayırdedici unsuru olan Türkçe, bilinen en eski zamanlardan beri yaşayan; mahiyet değiştirmeden devam eden bir dildir. Türkçe bugün gerek yayıldığı sahalar, gerekse konuşan nüfus bakımından dünyanın beş büyük dilinden biridir. Fakat, bu büyük Türk dünyası üç ayrı kökene dayalı yirmi yedi farklı alfabe kullanmaktadır. Bu bir dehşettir.
>
> Turkish, the main distinguishing element of our national identity, is a language that has continued without changing its essence from time in memoriam. Today, whether from the perspective of the regions across which it has spread or the population that speaks it, Turkish is one of the world's five greatest languages. However, this large Turkic world makes use of 27 different alphabets rooted in three separate orthographic systems. This is a catastrophe.

By asserting the underlying immutability of the family of related Turkic languages which he refers to as Turkish (*Türkçe*), and hence its essentially unitary nature, Korkmaz' statement elided patent distinctions in its many named varieties, effectively presuming, and therefore eliminating any question of, spoken mutual intelligibility across the Turkic languages. His hyperbole with regard to spoken language was, however, tempered by a description of "catastrophic" orthographic chaos endemic to the Turkic world, with the implication that written mutual intelligibility amongst the Turkic peoples had thus been compromised. By tacitly asserting *spoken* mutual intelligibility and simultaneously highlighting the lack of *written* mutual intelligibility, Korkmaz thus

implied that orthographic unity need only be redressed to restore complete linguistic mutual intelligibility amongst the Turkic peoples.

While Korkmaz stopped short of explaining the emergence of orthographic divergence amongst the Turkic languages or admitting any influence on spoken language from the unfortunate profusion of alphabets he describes, delegates to the FTLC and the other early language congresses did address these issues. In their discourse, orthographic, and indeed linguistic, variance was attributed not simply to the vicissitudes of time or parallel (d)evolution resulting from historical isolation, but rather to pernicious outside influences. Conquest and colonialism had subjected the Turkic peoples to more alphabets than any other, distancing them first from the Turkic proto-language preserved in runic inscriptions and believed to represent the common linguistic legacy of the Turkic peoples and then from the Common Language believed to have linguistically united the Turkic world merely a century past.

Deliberate interference in the form of alphabet reform and language planning during the Soviet era was deemed particularly harmful to mutual intelligibility insofar as the nationalities policies had forced the Turkic alphabets and languages apart, with the specific intent of dividing the Turkic peoples from their Turkish cousins and from one another. This general sentiment was cogently expressed in a comment by Uzbek delegate Holcigit Sanagulov during an ICTAS discussion period. While advocating the need for a union of Turkic peoples to protect against their once again falling victim to divisive external influences, Sanagulov pointed to the ease with which Moscow had been able to

isolate the Soviet Turks from one another linguistically through simple manipulation of their alphabets. He argued:

> Türkî halkların birbiriyle anlaşması basit-adi dilde mümkündür. Kril harflerinin kabul edilmesinden sonra biz diğer Türkîleri yazıda anlayamaz duruma düştük….
>
> It was possible for the Turkic people to understand one another in a straightforward patois. After the Cyrillic letters were adopted, we fell into a situation in which we were unable to understand other Turkic peoples in writing….

Echoing and building upon Sanagulov's claim, Kazakh delegate to ICTAS Erden Kacibekov likewise asserted spoken mutual intelligibility among the Turkic peoples but suggested that it was not simply the adoption of the Cyrillic alphabet, but rather the deliberate imposition of *different* Cyrillic alphabets that divided them linguistically. He also made reference to the success of the Soviet policy of *divide et impera* that produced "thirty nationalities" (*"otuz boya"*) from the "thirty different alphabets" (*"otuz çeşit alfabe"*) they imposed, arguing:

> Sovyetler Birliğinde bugün Kril esaslı otuz çeşit alfabe var…. Konuşmada hiçbir güçlük yok ama yazıda birbirimizi anlayamıyoruz. Türkistan'da dil çalışmaları Stalin zamanında durdu. Bizi otuz boya böldü ve amacına ulaştı.
>
> Today in the Soviet Union there are thirty different Cyrillic-based alphabets…. In speaking there is no hardship, but in writing we are unable to understand one another. In Turkistan, work on language came to a halt in Stalin's time. It divided us into thirty tribes and accomplished its objective.

While the focus among delegates who espoused mutual spoken intelligibility remained fixed on orthographic difference as the primary obstacle to full mutual intelligibility, others recognized that distinctions in orthography had brought about divergences among the Turkic languages which had also compromised spoken mutual intelligibility. If, as Fierman (1991a) argues, the Arabic alphabet served to obfuscate phonetic differences between the Turkic languages, thereby emphasizing linguistic commonality among the Turkic peoples (c.f., above), the discourse of delegates to the early linguistic congresses clearly suggested that the Cyrillic alphabet imposed linguistic and cultural distance on the Turkic peoples by causing existing linguistic differences to reemerge and introducing others.

In an interview for *Millî Kültür Dergisi*, that was included in a special report on the First Turkish Language Congress and that provides a cogent review of many of the issues addressed during the congress, professor of history and literature, Enver Mahmut addressed this point, emphasizing the way in which codification of separate Cyrillic alphabets for each of the Turkic peoples had harmed Turkic unity. Placing responsibility for linguistic and cultural distance that has resulted in persistent difficulties in understanding amongst the Turkic peoples squarely at the feet of Soviet planners, Mahmut suggested that Turkic orthography was deliberately overhauled as a means of targeting pan-Turkic unity and the threat it posed to Soviet power, citing as evidence the fact that other non-Slavic peoples who represented no such threat to the Soviet authorities--e.g., the Georgians and Armenians--had been allowed to retain orthographic independence. Mahmut argues:

Sovyetler, her Türk Cumhuriyeti'nde değişik bir alfabe kullanmak suretiyle sunî ayrıcalıklar yaratmıştır. Bunlar sistemli ırk politikanın ürünüdür. Niçin Türklerin dışındaki halklar kendi alfabelerini kullanıyorlar da, Türk Cumhuriyetleri değişik alfabeler kullanıyor? İşte bu yüzden Türk toplumu arasıdaki kültürel iletişim daralmakta ve lehçeler arasındaki farklılıklar büyümektedir.	The Soviets, by using a different alphabet in each of the Turkic republics, created artificial distinctions. These were a product of systematic racial politics. Why were the [Soviet] peoples other than the Turks using their own alphabet while the Turkic republics were using different alphabets? It is for this reason that cultural communication between the Turkic communities shrank, while differences between the dialects grew (Mahmut 1990:20).

If external forces had divided the Turkic peoples, however, the belief among organizers of and delegates to the early linguistic congresses was that linguistic differences were not so wide as to defy remedy and that concerted, collective, and cooperative action, beginning with the adoption of a common alphabet, could successfully reunite them. In the same *Millî Kültür Dergisi* article, Mahmut emphasizes that:

Konuşma dilinde anlaşabiliyoruz fakat yazı dilinde birbirimizi anlayamıyoruz. Bunun da sebebi farklı alfabeler kullandığımız içindir. Bir alfabe kullanırsak bunların hepisinden kurturuluz…. Kültürel iletişimin artması ve büyük bir homojen birlik oluşturmak için Latin Alfabesi'nde birleşmeliyiz.	We can understand one another in our spoken language, but we are unable to understand one another in our written language. The reason for this is the different alphabets we use. If we were to use one alphabet, we would be saved from such difficulties…. In order to increase cultural communication and create a

Zaten Sovyetler'deki Türk Cumhuriyetleri'nde bunu istiyorlar, bu doğrultuda karalar alıyorlar.	vast homogeneous union we must unite in the Latin alphabet. The Turkic republics in the Soviet Union already want this, and are making decisions in this direction (Mahmut 1990:20).

Finally, Mahmut adroitly explains patent linguistic rifts among the Turkic languages and the consequent need for linguistic standardization and purification not as a problem of inherent mutual intelligibility, but of orthography, suggesting that given the linguistic differentiation that has occurred in the Turkic languages as a result of the divergent alphabets imposed on them, the creation of a common alphabet must be followed by linguistic reform, beginning with the expulsion of Russian loanwords and the creation of a common Turkic lexicon. Thus, the need for creating a common lexicon is related to orthography, for it is the borrowing of foreign terms and the differences in the ways in which these loanwords are written and hence pronounced that is responsible for much of the pernicious differentiation in the spoken languages of the Turkic peoples.

Herşeyden önce ortak bir alfabe ve ortak bir terimler sözlüğü oluşturmamız gerekmektedir. Çünkü Türk lehçeleri arasındaki farklılıkları derinleştiren zemini oyan bu iki yapay parazittir. Bunlar ortadan kaldırılmalı ve bu olumsuz gidişin önüne geçilmelidir.	Above all else, we must create a common alphabet and a common dictionary of terminology. Because they act as the foundation that deepens differences among the Turkic dialects these two creations are parasites. They must be lifted away and this negative way of going must be hindered.
Türkiye Türkçesi 1860'lı yıllardan itibaren yoğun bir şekilde çeviriler yoluyla terimler almaktadır. Bunlar	Since the 1860s, Turkey's Turkish has adopted terms in a dense

alınırken Türkçeye uyarlanmadan aynen alınmıştır.

Sovyetler Birliği'ndeki Türk Cumhuriyetleri'de Rus dilinden iktibas yoluyla terimler almaktadır. Bunların yazılış ve okunuşları farklı farklıdır. Böyle devam ederse farklılıklar daha da büyüyecektir. Tek çare söylediğim gibi ortak bir alfabe ve ortak bir terimler sözlüğünün hazırlanmasıdır.

fashion through translations. When these are adopted, the same are eliminated from Turkish unheeded.

The Turkic republics in the Soviet Union took terms from the Russian language through citation. The way in which they are written and pronounced are completely different. If things continue in this fashion, the differences will grow even greater. The only solution is, as I have suggested, to prepare a common alphabet and a common terminological dictionary (Mahmut 1990:20).

Thus, as emerges in the metalinguistic discourses of the early linguistic congresses as well as ambient scholarly discourses on the issue of linguistic rapprochement within the Turkic world, the belief that linguistic divergences were, in essence, both artificial and superficial carried with it the implication that they could be reversed. By this logic, alphabet could be reformed to rectify the deleterious effects of external influence, rendering Turkic orthography more directly representational of phonetic inventory and setting the stage for the Turkic languages to be purified of external influence and for mutual intelligibility to thus be restored. As such, the assumption of latent mutual intelligibility serves as an organizing and enabling presupposition of the early linguistic congresses.

Moreover, as suggested above, the establishment of latent mutual intelligibility was key to claims of the Turkic world as a cohesive and recognizable entity and therefore critical to attempts at uniting the Turkic peoples under its rubric. In their belief that

mutual intelligibility could be restored and the Turkic peoples united through the medium of alphabet standardization and language purification, the delegates to the early linguistic congresses thus recalled the efforts of Gaspirali and other reformers laboring for Turkic linguistic unity under the czarist regime as well as the work of delegates to the 1926 Baku Turcology Congress, who advocated the adoption of a common alphabet, purging of foreign loanwords, and creation of a shared lexicon in much the same terms. There were, however, other ambient linguistic presuppositions that emerged in the discourse of the early linguistic congresses which were to mitigate against supranational linguistic unification.

ORTHOGRAPHY, NATIONALISM, AND SUPRANATIONALISM: THE IDEOLOGICAL DIALOGISM OF ORTHOGRAPHIC UNIFICATION AND SOCIOPOLITICAL ORIENTATION

Once the path to achieving Turkic linguistic unification had been sufficiently envisioned through the discourse of mutual intelligibility, which cast patent difficulties in communication as externally-imposed, superficial, and, above all, remediable, it remained to bring the real in line with the ideal, uniting the Turkic world by restoring presumed latent mutual intelligibility through corpus-related orthographic and linguistic reform. Given that alphabet had been suggested as the original and fundamental source of linguistic divergences among the Turkic peoples, the first order of business was to develop a concrete *ortak alfabe* proposal. Development of such a proposal was a two-step process. The first step involved determining which orthographic system would best

serve as a foundation for the common alphabet, while the second step necessitated deciding the specific form it should take. These two interrelated issues generated significant discussion and debate, as they touched on matters of both a pragmatic and an ideological nature. Together, these discourses revealed a dynamic tension between nationalist and supranationalist concerns which ultimately lay at the heart of Turkic world identity politics in the post-Soviet era.

The caution the delegates exhibited in approaching the business of developing a common alphabet was rooted first and foremost in a shared awareness of the symbolic capacity of orthography to index aspects of the social world and hence in an underlying ideological assumption that posited orthography, as a symbolic representation of language, as both a nexus and vector of national identity. That this postulate should inform the metalinguistic discourses of the early linguistic congresses is not surprising, as the notion of a "natural" connection between language and nation is one of the great ideological assumptions of the modern era. Rooted in late eighteenth century romanticism, and particularly in the work of Johann Herder who spoke of language as an essential element of *volksgeist*--the term he coined to describe the "special genius" specific to each nation--the presumptive link between language and nation profoundly influenced European notions of nation-building and quickly spread throughout the world via colonialism and intellectual commerce. Although orthographic systems as a whole are not generally specific to a single nation, the precise form of an alphabet, as it represents the language of a particular nation, is often highly specific, and hence, emblematic of both the language and the people who speak it. It is for this reason that the

Latin-based Turkish alphabet was deliberately referred to not as the Latin alphabet for Turkish but as the *Turkish alphabet* by the founder of the Turkish republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (Mango 1999). Thus, while language is primary, orthography, as a graphic representation of language, is likewise implicated in the symbolic process by which a nation is defined.

As detailed in chapter two, this hegemonic assumption linking language and nation was at the heart of the Turkish language reform as well as the nationalities policies of the Soviet state in Central Asia. Thus, insofar as it had informed the language ideology, or shaped the "linguistic culture," of both the Turkish and Turkic peoples, it was only natural that the "one language equals one people" presumption should likewise form the ideological backdrop against which efforts at linguistic and orthographic unification would take shape in the post-Soviet era. In this sense, the creation of a Turkic world was dependent on successfully extending the *volksgeist* of the Turkic peoples from a narrow nation-bound awareness of identity--i.e., the sense of being Turkish, Uzbek, Azeri--to a broad supranational, pan-Turkic consciousness in which a common alphabet and language were to figure prominently. This, anyway, was the perspective on the relationship between nationalism and supranationalism held by the Turkish organizers of and participants in the early linguistic congresses, whose linguistic culture was informed by an ethnolinguistic brand of nationalism which had grown out of pan-Turkist thought, absorbing aspects of its ideological assumptions in the process (Landau 1995a nd 1995b, Poulton 1997).

As emerges in the discourse of Turkic delegates to the early linguistic congresses, however, particularly in discussions of national alphabet debates and descriptions of the distinctive peculiarities of the respective Turkic languages that required representation within an *ortak alfabe*, this vision of an expansive *volksgeist* encompassing all of the Turkic peoples was often in direct conflict with the more bounded *volksgeist* at the heart of contemporary national identity politics amongst the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples, hence calling into question this notion of supranational consciousness as an extension of national consciousness. Thus while the early Turkic linguistic congresses were ideologically premised on the shared notion that the first step toward ensuring that a new or newly-revived supranational consciousness would take root in the Turkic world was the creation of a common Turkic language--the most obvious precondition of which was a common Turkic alphabet--pragmatically speaking, the notion of an *ortak alfabe* uniting the many Turkic peoples into a vast Turkic world bumped up against the desire among the ex-Soviet peoples to retain a sense of national distinctiveness and nurture a nascent nationhood, revealing differences in respective understandings of the nature of nationalism and supranationalism.

Largely freed from the repressive oversight of the Soviet state during the chaos of its slow, spiraling collapse, the Turkic republics had quickly demonstrated a keen desire to shed the effects of russification and forge first an autonomous, and then an independent, national identity distinct from their Soviet past. That linguistic issues figured centrally in discussions of nation-building throughout the ex-Soviet Turkic world is not surprising, given the global hegemony of the "one language, one people," precept,

not to mention the Turkic peoples' localized experience of this ideological precept under the application of the Soviet nationalities policies. In their comprehensive examination of language politics in the Central Asian republics in the months leading up to and the years following the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Landau and Kellner-Heinkele point to the passage of language laws designating the titular language as the official "state"[44] language in each of the republics between 1989 and 1990 as an early indication of the importance of language to emerging nationalism in the region. Thus, although the specifics of their respective language declarations differed, the Turkic republics were nonetheless united in their "determination that the titular language was to be revived, developed and improved in status and corpus as a state language common to all the inhabitants, that is, a national language" (2001:73).

Naturally, one of the first issues addressed in efforts at de-russifying the titular languages, improving their status, and rendering them a proper symbol of their respective nations was that of orthographic reform. As a result, proposals for reforming national orthographic systems were developed and debated across the Turkic republics. These proposals generally revolved around four distinct orthographic options: (1) retaining the Cyrillic, (2) resuscitating the Arabic, (3) adopting the Latin, and (4) reviving the Orhun-Yenisey. A brief examination of the arguments mustered in support of each of these options demonstrates the ideological linkage between orthography, language, culture, and

[44] The term "state" is enclosed in quotation marks because as Landau and Kellner-Heinkele point out, it refers not to the central state, represented by Moscow, but rather to an emergent local sense of state, represented by the governing apparatus in each of the republics.

politics already extant within the Central Asian republics at the time the early Turkic linguistic congresses were convened in Turkey.

Proponents of retaining the Cyrillic alphabet emphasized progress in science and literature made during the Soviet era, warning that knowledge of such achievements, catalogued in Cyrillic for the past half century, would be lost were the alphabet to be abandoned and reminded their fellow countrymen that facility in the Cyrillic alphabet eased access to Russian, which offered both the pragmatic advantages and the international prestige associated with knowledge of a recognized world language. Supporters of resuscitating the Arabic alphabet, by contrast, emphasized the Turkic people's Islamic identity, forecast their inclusion in the great Islamic *umma*, and held out the prospect of direct access to the Koran and other important Islamic texts, as well as early Turkic literary works written in the Arabic script. Proponents of the Latin alphabet meanwhile stressed the Turkic peoples' historic use of a Latin-based alphabet (c.f., chapter two), recycled arguments from the Baku Turcology Congress concerning the comparative ease with which the script could be learned, and depicted it as a vehicle of modernization which would facilitate the learning of Western languages and the establishment of ties to Turkey and the West, emphasizing the social, political, and economic advantages that would accrue from such strategic relations. Finally, supporters of the Orhun-Yenisey characters,[45] argued that the ancient runic script used to inscribe

[45] As the first known script of the Altaic language family, Orhun-Yenisey is claimed by all Turkic peoples. A segment of writing in the script is represented on the back side of the "new" Azerbaijani five manat bill that was first issued in 2006. Its inclusion on the bill is meant to represent Azerbaijan's connection to the ur-Turkic Göktürks and hence

the Turkic *ursprache* spoken by the Göktürks offered the only true Turkic alternative--i.e., the only alphabet linguistically and culturally suited to the Turkic languages insofar as all other proposed alphabets were based on orthographic systems developed by, and hence tied to, other cultures--and suggested that its adoption would constitute a fitting

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both its long history and the ethnic ties it shares with the other Turkic peoples. The "upside down e" (*ə*) that also appears on the bill was adopted on May 16, 1992 in place of the character *ä* from the original post-Soviet Latin-based Azerbaijan alphabet adopted on December 25, 1991. The character *ä* was part of the *ortak alfabe* proposal approved during ICTAS, so replacing it with the character *ə* was considered to be an assertion of Azerbaijan's national distinctiveness by the linguists advising the government who recommended this change. The image of the five manat bill was found at: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/ab/5_manat_G%C3%BCl_Tigin_Yaz%C4%B1lar%C4%B1.jpg, last accessed on August 2, 2011.

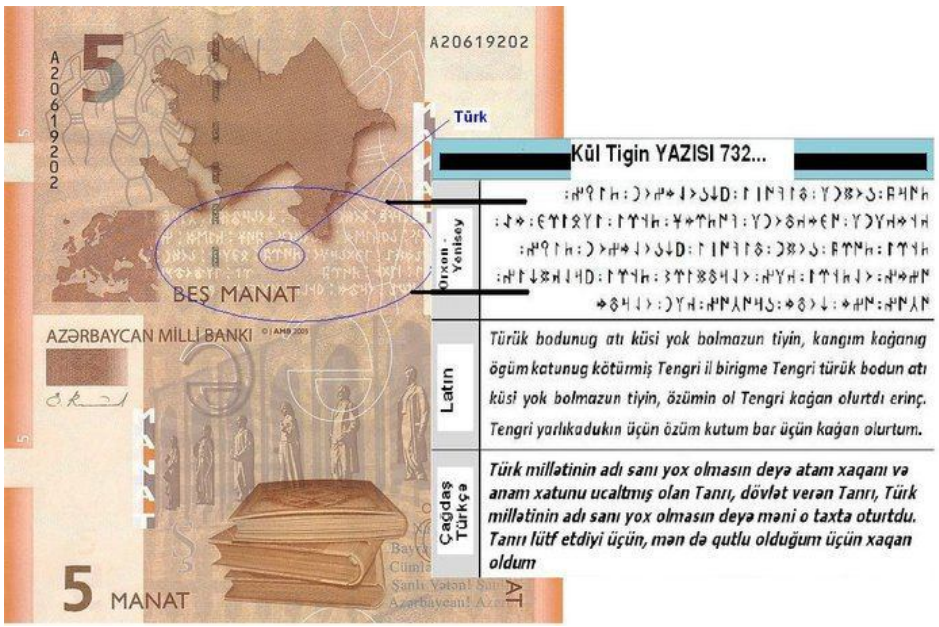

Figure 2.3 Image of the "new" Azerbaijani five manat bill

tribute to the Turkic peoples' historical greatness which would further serve to "put them on the map" once again.[46]

As such arguments clearly suggest, each of the national alphabet proposals were thus ideologically linked to not only the languages but also the societies indexed by the respective orthographic systems, and hence represented four divergent perspectives regarding the sociopolitical orientation the fledgling nations ought to adopt. Should the Turkic peoples carry on within the Russian sphere of influence or revive their pre-Soviet Muslim identity and seek entry into the broader Islamic *umma*? Should they ally themselves with Turkey and the Western world, or carve out a uniquely Turkic pre-nationalist identity among themselves? Thus, the ideological link between orthography and social identity which had characterized nineteenth and early twentieth century efforts at uniting the Turkic peoples through a common alphabet and now defined attempts at creating a contemporary Turkic world by the same means was also at the heart of Soviet-era nationalities policies as well as contemporary nation-building efforts within the Turkic republics, creating a dynamic tension between nationalism and supranationalism.

It should come as no surprise, then, that direct reference to the national alphabet proposals and the discourses surrounding them were made by delegates to the Turkic linguistic congresses, many of whom had taken part in national alphabet debates in their home countries, as they sought to reconcile the dialectic within post-Soviet identity

[46] The majority of the information presented here regarding the various arguments in favor of the four scripts is based on personal interviews conducted in the field with scholars from across the Turkic world, however Landau and Kellner-Heinkele (2001:131) also discuss various of these discourses to a limited degree.

politics between nationalist self-determinism and supranationalist collectivism in creating a common Turkic alphabet. ICTAS delegate Köbey Husainov, for example, remarked:

> Bizde dört çeşit görüş vardır. (1) Yazarlar, tarihçiler (altmışını geçenler) Arap alfabesi tekrar canlandırılmalıdır demektedir. Sebep olarak altmış yaşına gelenler kendi tarihini bilmemektedir. (2) İhtilâlden önce kaç tane gazete, dergi, ve kitap (Arapça eser) var diye baktığımızda, Kazak medeniyetinin esas eserlerinini Kril harfleriyle çıktığı anlaşılmaktadır. Dolayısıyla aydınların bir kısmı da Kril harfleri kalsın şeklinde bir görüş ileri sürüyorlar. (3) Bir ay önce *Ana Tili* gazetesinde Kaydrov Abduali… Latin'in gerekliliğini ilmi, siyasî, ve ekonomik yönden inceleyen bir makalesi yayınladı. Kazakıstan'da durumun (Latin hususunda) ne olduğunu söylemek zor. Gelecekteki münasebetlerimizin nasıl olacağını bilemeyiz. Latin hakkındaki görüşmeler daha yeni başladı. Kazak Kril alfabesinde kırk iki harf var. Rus çocukları iki-üç, Kazak çocukları dört-beş ayda öğreniyor. (4) Prof. Dr. Cumusbekov on yedi harfli Orhun-Yenisey alfabesine geçme taraftarı.
>
> Amongst us [in Kazakhstan], there are four different perspectives: (1) writers and historians over the age of 60 say that the Arabic alphabet must be resurrected. The justification is that those under 60 years of age don't know their own history. (2) When we look at how many newspapers, journals, and books (Arabic works) there were before the revolution, it becomes clear that the Kazakh civilization's foundational works were produced in the Cyrillic alphabet. As a result a faction of intellectuals forwarded the notion that the Cyrillic letters should remain. (3) A month ago an article by Abduali Kaydrov… investigating the necessity of the Latin from a scientific, political, and economic perspective was published in *Mother Tongue* newspaper. In Kazakstan it is difficult to say what the situation is (in terms of Latin). We can't know how future discussions will go. Opinions about Latin are still new. The Kazakh Cyrillic alphabet has 42 letters. Russian children learn it in 2-3 months, Kazakh children in 4-5 months. (4) Prof. Dr. Cumusbekov is a supporter of passing to the 17 letter Orhun-Yenisey alphabet.

ICTAS delegate Alaeddin Aliev likewise remarked on the dimensions of orthographic debate in his native Azerbaijan, noting that although discussion revolved around four varying propositions, most Azeris preferred the Latin orthographic system.

Bizde de dört akım var: (1) Orhun-Yenisey alfabesine dönelim, (2) Arap alfabesine dönelim, (3) Kril afabesini destekliyenler, ve (4) (bunlar %90-95) Latin alfabesini destekliyenler.	With us there are also four currents: (1) let's return to the Orhun-Yenisey alphabet, (2) let's revert to the Arabic alphabet, (3) those who support the Cyrillic alphabet, and (4) (and these are 90-95%) those who are in favor of the Latin alphabet.

Other delegates also noted that clear penchants for a particular orthographic system were in evidence in their respective republics, although such preferences were not always the same. Thus, while Aliev reported that his countrymen were leaning toward the Latin alphabet, Husainov's compatriot Amantay Torgaev reported that proponents of resuscitating the Arabic alphabet had made significant inroads in Kazakh public opinion and suggested that if a Latin-based *ortak alfabe* were to stand a chance of being adopted in Kazakhstan, the case for the Latin alphabet ought to be made to the Kazakh people without delay. He noted:

Kazakıstan'da Latin'den fazla Arap harflerini propaganda işi güçlüdür. Bu konuda televizyonda, dergi, ve gazetelerde çok şeyler yazılmaktadır. Hatta bazı okullarda	In Kazakhstan, propaganda in favor of the Arabic letters is far stronger than for Latin. A great deal has been written about this topic on television, and in journals and

Arap alfabesi eğitimi yapılmaktadır. Latin alfabesi ile tek bir makale çıktı (Akademik Kaydarov). Bu işin propagandasının yapılması gerekir.	newspapers. In fact, instruction in the Arabic alphabet has been undertaken in some schools. With the Latin alphabet, a single article has come out (by the scholar Kaydarov). It is necessary to carry out propaganda on this business.

Within the context of the early linguistic congresses, discussion of the four options under consideration in national orthographic debates across Central Asia, mention of the respective supporting arguments, and assessments of their relative degree of popular support was thus not simply informative, but suggested an array of orthographic options and served as a template for decisions regarding the best orthographic system upon which to base the *ortak alfabe*. Recalling Fishman's (1993b) notion of the "Language Y" factor lurking behind corpus-related language planning discussions and thus reframing them as status-related calculations, we thus find not a single "language Y," but several, suggesting both the complexity and relative unboundedness of identity politics in the post-Soviet era. Thus, rather than addressing the linguistic appropriateness of the Latin, Arabic, Cyrillic, and Orhun-Yenisey scripts for representing the Turkic languages, these ostensibly corpus-related discussions revolved, instead, around status-based considerations concerning the relative value of establishing relations with the societies in which these orthographic systems were in use.

In this sense, such discourses offered a clear indication that the Turkic republics both individually and collectively remained undecided about national orthographic reform and, by extension, the politics of post-Soviet identity. On the one hand, this

liminal period thus seemed to offer the best opportunity for realizing orthographic unity across the Turkic world, insofar as the public will for alphabet reform was high (Landau and Kellner-Heinkele 2001), but concrete steps had not yet been taken. On the other hand, the unresolved nature of national identity politics in the Turkic republics offered significant challenges to orthographic unification, for it was self evident in an environment so long saturated by the symbolism inherent to orthographic choice, that the creation of an *ortak alfabe* had clear implications for the national orthography debates and hence the politics of post-Soviet identity within the individual Turkic republics.

As such, some delegates expressed concerns that potential conflicts between nationalist aspirations burgeoning within their home countries and the supranationalist, or pan-Turkist, sentiments guiding the early linguistic congresses might derail the adoption of a common Turkic alphabet. Amantay Torgaev hinted at this possibility in his suggestion, cited above, that the advantages of a Latin-based alphabet for the Kazakh language needed to be spelled out to the Kazakh public if a Latin-based *ortak alfabe* were to stand a chance of being accepted in Kazakhstan. ICTAS delegate representing Tataristan, Kenesbay Musaev, however, spoke more directly to the potential effect that conflict between nationalist and supranationalist sentiment might have on the success of efforts to create a common Turkic alphabet, presciently remarking that regardless of the orthographic system chosen as the foundation of the *ortak alfabe* project and the specific orthographic proposal adopted by delegates to the early linguistic congresses, the decision was quite likely to face criticism within the republics from those not in attendance. Recalling the success of the 1926 Baku Turcology Congress in creating a

common alphabet that was collectively approved by the Turkic peoples, Musaev warned his fellow delegates against underestimating the power of nationalist, or in his terms, "ethnic," thinking, reminding them of the importance of extralinguistic factors of a pragmatic as well as an ineffable psychosocial nature in establishing a legitimate and enduring orthography. He argued:

> Bu işin etnik bir yönü de var. Burada bir karar alsak da ülkelerimize dönünce "biz senin fikrine katılmıyoruz, bizim kendi görüşümüz var" demeleri kuvvetle muhtemeldir. Bu konunun psikolojik, pedagojik, fizyolojik, yönleri düşünülmelidir. 1926'da kabul edilen alfabede ise bu konular düşünülmüştü ve iyi bir alfabe ortaya çıkmıştı.
>
> There is also an ethnic side to this business. If we take a decision here, when we return to our country, there is a strong probability they will say "we don't agree with your opinion, we have our own perspectives." It is necessary to consider the psychological, pedagogical, and physiological aspects of this topic. These matters were considered in relation to the alphabet adopted in 1926 and a very good alphabet resulted.

Thus, although none of the Turkic delegates explicitly raised the issue of conflicts of interest between national and supranational orthographic planning efforts--indeed this may have been precluded within the context of an congress devoted to the actual corpus-planning involved in creating a common Turkic orthography--through their descriptions of the dimensions of orthographic debate within their home republics, a picture of prospective conflicts of interest begins to emerge. By raising the specter of "ethnic," or national, difference and suggesting that an ortak alfabe agreed upon by ICTAS delegates might receive little consideration among those who wrestled with issues of national

orthography in each of the respective republics, Musaev comes closest to the edge of this "lacuna of the unspoken." Peering inside, we begin to understand, as was made clear to me in retrospective interviews with former delegates, that even among those ostensibly dedicated to the supranationalist goal of creating of an *ortak alfabe*, as most delegates were, it was widely understood that adoption of a common alphabet would inherently limit the possibilities for national expression.

Thus, despite a shared conviction in the essential mutual intelligibility of the Turkic languages and an attendant belief in the need to overcome patent communication divides through the creation of a common Turkic alphabet, the specifics of the endeavor itself proved surprisingly difficult insofar as the dimensions of debate were complicated by the fact that orthography had already become an issue of national debate in the Central Asian republics during the waning days of the Soviet Union and first blush of independence (Landau and Kellner Heinkele 2001). In this sense, while the *ortak alfabe* and *ortak dil* projects were premised on an extended concept of *volksgeist* that incorporated all of the Turkic peoples as ethnolinguistic kin, national language and orthography debates raging in the respective Turkic republics likewise drew upon notions of *volksgeist* in addressing issues of social consolidation through language, but in a bounded, national sense that was in stark counterpoint to the expanded Turkic consciousness the *ortak alfabe* project aimed to foster.

This same sense of a conflict of interest between the goals of nationalism and supranationalism also emerges in the discourse of Turkic delegates during discussions over the form the ortak alfabe should take, for it was generally recognized that adoption

of a common alphabet would limit the available characters to those most commonly found in the Turkic languages--since no single alphabet could truly represent the full phonetic inventory of any one language, let alone a family of languages[47]--and thereby further constrain the ability of the Turkic republics to express national identity through orthographic representation. As such, the adoption of a common alphabet that failed to account for the distinctiveness of the national languages, it was feared, would serve to exacerbate the damage that many delegates felt had already been done to their respective languages with the imposition of Cyrillic in the 1930s--which they blamed for precipitating the loss of critical phonological features not represented by the alphabet and hence weakening their languages--by once again confining representation of those features to an alphabet that "sacrificed the individual in the name of the collective," or the distinctive national in the name of the (pan-)Turkic supranational.

Thus, with the specific injuries visited on their individual Turkic languages by the imposition of Cyrillic characters still fresh in their minds, many of the delegates recognized the unprecedented opportunity to remedy their respective linguistic grievances with the creation of a new alphabet and were keen that such considerations be taken into account in the creation of an *ortak alfabe*. Recounting the deleterious effect of Cyrillic on the Turkmen language, ICTAS delegate from Ashgabat, Cebbar Göklenov noted:

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[47] Turkish delegate Hasan Eren makes this explicit when he notes: "No one alphabet is perfect… not one can provide [representation] for all the sounds in a language" (*"Hiçbir alfabe mükemmel değildir… hiçbiri dildeki bütün sesleri vermemektedir"*).

1940'ta Krile geçmekle hata yapıldı. Noksanlıkları söylendi. Türkmen alfabesindeki sekiz harf gereksizdi…. Yaşlılarımız Nevaî, Gencevîleri rahatça okuyorduk, şimdi ise onları çervirmek gerek diyorlar… Mesela, ñ, ä (açık), h(x), dudak sesi (w) var, ayrıca uzunluklar, bunların mutlaka gösterilmesi lazım. Şimdiye kadar Kril'de kullanılmıyordu. Dolayısıyla da nerede uzun, nerede kısa söyleneceği bilinmiyordu. Bazen anlaşma problemleri ortaya çıkıyordu. Türkmen olmayanların ise doğru konuşmaları imkânsız hale geliyordu.	With the passage to Cyrillic in 1940, a mistake was made. Imperfections it was said. Eight of the letters in the Turkmen alphabet were [deemed] unnecessary…. We were easily able to read our elders, the Nevais and the Gencevis, but now they say it is necessary to translate them… For example, there are ñ, ä (open), h(x), and the labial sound (w), furthermore the long vowels, these most assuredly must be represented. Thus far, they have not been represented in Cyrillic. And therefore it is unknown where they should be pronounced long and where short. Sometimes difficulties in understanding have emerged. It has even come to the point where it is impossible for those who are not Turkmen to speak correctly.

ICTAS delegate Berdiyar Yusupov likewise noted the harm done to his native Uzbek by the introduction of Cyrillic:

Bizim alfabemiz Türkî halklar arasında en zayıf alfabe sayılıyor. Rus alfabesindeki gibi aynı işaretlerle karşılanan altı tane sesli harf var, ama ağızda sekiz-dokuz tane sesli var. Bir harf (*y*) ile iki fonem (/o/ and /ö/) ifade edilmektedir; /u/ ve /ü/ fonemleri de tek harflidir. Bu da ağızın özelliğini tam olarak ifade etmekten uzak kalıyor. Gençler yanlış	Our alphabet is regarded as the weakest alphabet amongst the Turkic peoples. There are six vowels represented by the same characters as are found in the Russian alphabet, but in speech there are eight or nine vowels. Two phonemes (/o/ and /ö/) are represented by one letter (*y*); the phonemes /u/ and /ü/ are also represented by one letter. This is

telaffuz ediyorlar. Başka Türkî dillerinde olmayan, sadece Özbeklere mahsus bir yuvarlak "a" sesi var, bunu karşılayacak bir işaret bulamıyoruz. Bu da yanlış anlamalara yol açabiliyor. Mesala, *ana* (işte), *âna* (anne); *ata* (isim, ad ver) *âta* (baba); *sal* (azıcık), *sâl* (vur); *kam* (az) *kâm* (maksat). Bunları değişik harflerle belirtmemiz gerekecektir. Mesala üstüne bir işaret konularak halledilebilir…. Konsanantlarda da bazı problemler var; [j], [c], [n] sesi gibi.

also far from representing exactly the characteristics of speech. Young people pronounce them incorrectly. There is a rounded "a" sound that is peculiar to the Uzbeks and not found in the other Turkic languages; we can't find a character to represent this. And this can open the door to misunderstandings. For example, *ana* (there) *âna* (mother), *ata* (name), *âta* (father), *sal* (a bit), *sâl* (hit); *kam* (few), *kâm* (purpose). We will need to indicate these with different letters. For example, it can be resolved by placing a diacritical over it…. There are also some problems with consonants, such as the sounds [j], [c], and [n].

While of obvious importance to national orthography debates, such detailed discussions of the unique phonetic features of the individual Turkic languages not only called into question the presumption of mutual intelligibility across the languages, but also ran contrary to the goals of the *ortak alfabe* project, which sought orthographic commonality rather than diversity. As a result, a number of delegates, afraid that excessive concern with orthographic representation of the specific features of each of the individual Turkic languages would ultimately derail efforts to create a common alphabet, sought to quell such discussions. For example, Turkish linguist Ahmet Bican Ercilasun cautioned:

Benim fikrim diğer Türk boyları lehçeleri, şiveleri için de çok

In my opinion, it's better not to go too far into the details of the

teferruata gitmemek. O zaman bizimki dialektoloji alfabesi olur…. Buna hiç lüzüm yok…. O kadar variyantları göstermek de lazım değil; mümkün olduğu kadar sade, basit bir alfabe kabul etmeli.	dialects and vernaculars of the different Turkic peoples. In that case, our alphabet will become a dialectology alphabet … There is no need for that…. There is no need to show the variants to that degree; insofar as is possible, a simple, basic alphabet should be adopted.

Echoing Ercilasun's sentiments, Turkish linguist Zeynep Korkmaz likewise argued that the need for delegates to maintain a pragmatic focus on adopting a common Latin-based alphabet across the Turkic world rather than being distracted by the details of linguistic peculiarities or political distinctiveness. Korkmaz' mention of the many objections and numerous naysayers that had to be overcome between when the Latin-based Turkish alphabet was first proposed in 1923 and finally adopted in 1928 furthermore served as a reminder to Turkic delegates that linguistic reform is always contentious and that compromises of a pragmatic nature must necessarily be made, in supranational as in national contexts, in the name of a social consolidation. She argued:

Fazla teferruata gitmemek lazım…. Alfabe kolaylaştırıcıdır, fonetik değerler esasları üzerinde durmayalım…. Türkiye'de 1923'te İzmir'de İktisat Kongresinde Latin harfleri teklif edilmişti ancak itirazlar çoktu, belli bir hazırlık süresinden sonra ancak 1928 yılında kabul edilebildi.	It is not necessary to go into excessive detail…. Alphabet is a facilitator; let us not dwell on the roots of phonetic values…. In Turkey, the Latin letters were proposed in 1923 at the Izmir Economic Congress, but opponents were many; only after a certain preparatory period was it able to be accepted in 1928.

Here it is important to note that it was Turkish delegates, for whom national identity was far more solidified and the issue of national orthography had long since been settled, who expressed concerns over the divisive effects of focusing too closely on the linguistic peculiarities of the individual languages in the drive to create a supranational *ortak alfabe* rather than the Turkic delegates for whom the issue of national identity was still under active negotiation. In this sense, while the dimensions of the *ortak alfabe* debates were defined in large part by a shared recognition among the many delegates to the early linguistic congresses of the importance of a common alphabet to the development of a supranational ethnolinguistic consciousness, the way in which supranationalism was conceptualized, particularly in its perceived relationship to nationalism, was different for Turkish and Turkic delegates. Ideologically speaking, while Turkish organizers and participants tended to see supranational affiliation as *expanding* national identity, Turkic delegates tended to view it as *constraining* national identity. Although these differences in perspective were largely attributable to their different stages of national development, they were also an artifact of different localized experiences with the broad institutionalized discourses of nationalism and supranationalism and the attendant effects on their respective linguistic cultures.

Thus, while in the pre-Soviet era, the Turkic peoples had nurtured a sense of ethnolinguistic consciousness that cut across proto-national boundaries and in which the supranational was conceived of as an extension of the national (i.e., pan-Turkism as an extrapolation of the local Turkic tribe), this broad sense of supranational ethnolinguistic, or pan-Turkic, consciousness had been lost during the Soviet era. While in Turkey, pan-

Turkic consciousness was absorbed into national identity during the Republican period (c.f., chapter two) and manifested in foreign policy decisions, such as the 1974 invasion of Cyprus, that sought to protect the interests of "outside Turks" (*"dış Türkler"*) in Central Asia, it was demonized as "chauvinism", or racism, by the Soviet authorities, who labored to replace this broad sense of ethnic consciousness with both a republic-based "national" consciousness that served to divide the Turkic peoples from one another, on the one hand, and a class-based "supranational" consciousness that served to unite disparate elements under the rubric of the multi-ethnic Soviet state, on the other. Furthermore, these objectives were accomplished through the modality of language and orthography: "national" languages and orthographies were created in each of the Turkic republics on the principle of introducing maximal distance from the related Turkic languages and alphabets, and the Cyrillic alphabet was imposed as a means of easing acquisition of Russian, the "supranational" unifying language.

The fundamental difference in perspective regarding the role of language and orthography in national consolidation and supranational affiliation developed as a result of their different historical engagements with such constructs, was thus to have a profound effect on the linguistic cultures of the Turks and the Central Asian Turkic peoples and hence their respective understandings of *ortak alfabe* project. Thus, while under the Soviet system "national" identity, as a product of the Soviet nationalities policies, served the interests of supranationalist identity, it did so in a way that allowed for, indeed encouraged, the retention of national distinctiveness--albeit as defined by the central Soviet state and their local proxies rather than the "nationals" themselves and thus

criticized as "false" nationalism--rather than its complete subsumption under the aegis of the "supranational." This, then, was in stark contrast to the formulation of the relationship between the national and the supranational underpinning the *ortak alfabe* project, which required national distinctiveness in the form of phonological repertoire to be sacrificed in the name of supranational orthographic unity, except, of course--and this was to become an important point of contention in the dynamics of orthographic and linguistic rapprochement in the aftermath of the congresses--for the Turks, for whom the creation of an *ortak alfabe* entailed no sacrifice in national orthographic identity, that is, as long as a Latin-based alphabet devised around the existing Turkish alphabet were chosen as its base.

Thus, for many Central Asian delegates, this limitation of the individual in the name of the collective, at the very moment when the opportunity to expand the notion of national distinctiveness encouraged under Soviet rule into a "proper" sense of national identity presented itself, was a serious consideration with implications that transcended concerns over linguistic distinctiveness and spoke directly to larger issues of national sovereignty. In the words of one such former delegate:

> Turkey chose the Latin alphabet because Ataturk wanted to orient the country toward the West. After decades under Soviet rule we didn't want to be limited in how we chose to orient ourselves. We wanted to chose our own path, form our own national identity, and create our own affiliations. In the end, the *ortak alfabe* decided upon, regardless of its form, would have hemmed us in.

ORTHOGRAPHIC AGENCY IN THE PRODUCTION OF SOCIOPOLITICAL IDENTITY

Behind such concerns over the potential loss of linguistic distinctiveness and national identity from the adoption of a common Turkic alphabet lay another of the shared organizing presuppositions of the early linguistic congresses, namely the notion that orthography possesses not simply the symbolic capacity to index social identity but also actual *agency* in its production. In essence, this notion derives from the belief that orthography is an organic outgrowth of the worldview professed by the people who speak the language it encodes and therefore acts both as a mechanism of its continuing hegemony and an agent in the ongoing socialization of those who espouse it. Thus, when orthographies are transplanted, as they are wont to be, so too is the attendant worldview. In this sense, extrapolating from Mikhail Bakhtin's assertion that there are no neutral words, that "[a]ll words have the 'taste' of a profession, a genre, a tendency, a party, a particular work, a particular person a generation, an age group, the day and hour. Each word tastes of the context and contexts in which it has lived its socially charged life…" (1981:293), it would seem that for the Turkic peoples who have been served a veritable "alphabet soup" of alphabets, there are no neutral letters--each ostensibly arbitrary orthographic character carries whispers of past lives which contribute to the social production of the new contexts of its use.

Locating the belief that orthography acts not simply as a symbol of social identity but also as an agent in its production in the historical context of its instantiation, we find that this presupposition has different derivations for the Anatolian Turks versus the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples. Among the Turks, the notion of orthographic agency is rooted in

the national alphabet reforms of 1928, by which the introduction of a Latin-based Turkish script was designed to divorce the Turkish peoples from their Ottoman past and create a new ethnolinguistic consciousness in keeping with the goals and objectives of the nascent nationalist state (c.f., chapters two, five). Among the Turkic peoples, on the other hand, the notion of orthographic agency is an artifact of Soviet linguistic policy which, as part of the assimilationist strategy employed by Soviet authorities against their Central Asian subjects, held that the application of the Cyrillic script to the Turkic languages would pave the way for the eventual wholesale adoption of Soviet identity (c.f., chapter two), which would ultimately render "nationalism" obsolete. The difference here is that where orthographic agency in the Turkish context served the purposes of nationalism, freeing the Turks from foreign influence and allowing a native national consciousness to develop, in the Soviet context orthographic agency was the means of imperial domination, stifling native modalities of national identity. Given the national origin of the organizers of the *ortak alfabe* project, it is the former, Turkish, sense of orthographic agency that served as the primary enabling presupposition for the early Turkic linguistic congresses--namely, the notion that a common orthography would serve to unite the Turkic peoples linguistically, socioculturally, and geopolitically. In the words of Turkish linguist Zeynep Korkmaz: "A unifying, unified alphabet must be created" (*"Birleştirici, birlik yaratıcı alfabe yaratılmalıdır"*). That said, I will focus here on the latter, Turkic, sense of orthographic agency, as it is this oppositional agentive construction that called into question, and thus ultimately served to stymie, the aims of orthographic rapprochement within the Turkic world embodied by the *ortak alfabe* project.

The power, among the Turkic peoples, of the belief in the presumptive role played by orthography in the production of social identity first became clear to me during a trip to Azerbaijan in the mid 1990s. I was in the beginning stages of studying Russian at the time, and my imperfect knowledge of the language was in stark contrast to my facility in Turkish and Azeri, prompting frequent comments from Azerbaijani friends and acquaintances that learning Russian would have been far easier for me had I learned my first Turkic language in the Cyrillic rather than the Latin alphabet. Assuming that this was a comment on the difficulty of the Cyrillic script, I responded that learning the alphabet had been the easy part, it was mastering the language itself that was difficult and time-consuming. This, however, was a misunderstanding of the original comment, which, after further discussion, I finally understood to mean that had the first Turkic language in which I gained fluency been written in the Cyrillic script, I would have acquired a sense for the "psychology" of Russians which would have eased my study of their language.

Of particular significance here is the perception that orthography provides an entrée into the "psychology" of the speakers of the language for which it was developed. This notion seems to suggests an elaboration of the Whorfian principles of linguistic determinism which implies that the ways in which orthography organizes the phonemic features of a language reflect the cultural categories inherent to that language and hence the ways in which its speakers classify the experienced world. By extension, the only script appropriate to a language would be one that was developed by its speakers, and that script, when applied to or imposed on a language for which it was not designed, would be

unable to adequately reflect the cultural categories inherent to the borrowing second language. Furthermore, insofar as it carries an association with the cultural categories of the first language and is unable to reflect the cultural categories inherent to the second language, the "foreign" orthography imposes the worldview or mindset of the speakers of the first language on those of the second. While in aid of foreign language learning, this may be considered a desirable outcome, in the service of identity politics it is perceived to bespeak cultural imperialism with the associated implication of loss of cultural identity.

Regardless of its theoretical soundness, this hegemonic belief in the agency exerted on social identity by orthography appears to have significantly influenced the manner in which Turkic linguists and language professionals thought about orthographic reform in the post-Soviet era, as was reflected in the statements of several delegates to the early linguistic congresses, including Uzbek delegate Holcigit Sanagulov, who, during one of the ICTAS discussion periods, recalled the colonizing effect of the Cyrillic alphabet on Turkic culture, arguing:

> Arap alfabesi tarihimizde bin yıllık bir dönemi kapsamaktadır…. Ancak bu harfler Özbeklerin ve genel olarak Türkî halklara Arapça (dili) öğretmemiştir. Bin yıl kullanılan Arap harfleri bize Arap dilini öğretmediyse de, elli yıldır kullanılan Kril alfabesi biz Türkleri Ruslaştırdı. Biz Rus dilinde konuşan topluluklara dönüştük.
>
> The Arabic alphabet encompasses a thousand-year era of our history…. However, these letters were unable to teach the Arabic language to the Uzbeks or more generally the Turkic peoples. Yet, whereas the Arabic letters used for a thousand years were unable to teach us the Arabic language, the Cyrillic letters used for 50 years Russified us

> Turks. We turned into a Russian-speaking society.

Sanagulov's assertion that the Cyrillic alphabet turned the Turkic peoples into not just Russian speakers, but a Russian-speaking *society*, affords social agency to the Cyrillic orthography in not just effecting linguistic assimilation, but also promulgating cultural imperialism. This line of reasoning, however, begs the question as to the Arabic alphabet's earlier failure to produce a similar effect. Although I initially assumed that this was attributable to the disparity in literacy rates of the two eras in which the orthographies were imposed, a far more nuanced explanation emerged in interviews with Turkic linguists.

From a historical perspective, the transhumant nature of Turkic society tended to preclude the locational stability necessary to establish high rates of literacy. Thus, the process by which Arab missionaries had sought to spread Islamic ideology in the 7th and 8th centuries generally entailed promulgating the daily rituals and accepted practices of Islam rather than a familiarity with the Koran as a text, and hence did not necessitate a direct knowledge of Arabic or the Arabic script among the masses. Communist ideology, on the other hand, was aimed at the masses and required not only an adherence to its core values but also an understanding of its guiding principles in order to effectively assimilate the Central Asians into a centralized and modernized state. Towards that end, Soviet administrators, tasked with promulgating communism in Central Asia, set forth a program heavily dependent on education, and hence literacy, to achieve their goal--in essence, relying on the medium of language encoded in the Cyrillic alphabet as a conduit

for the inculcation of Soviet culture and the creation of the "Soviet man" (c.f., chapter one). Thus, it was arguably the modality of the two ideologies, Islamic and communist, that determined the role of their respective alphabets in the propagation of cultural imperialism, for while the adoption of the Arabic script was largely incidental to the spread of Islam, enabling the Central Asian masses to became Muslims without becoming writers, or even speakers, of Arabic, education was at the center of communist ideology and orthography thus at the vanguard of Soviet imperialism.

Given their shared personal experience of orthographic imperialism and common perception of its harmful effects on their national cultures, Turkic delegates to the early linguistic congresses were understandably concerned about the potential implications of adopting a new orthographic system on the dynamics of post-Soviet identity formation and Turkic unification. This very point was taken up by ICTAS delegate representing Tataristan, Kenesbay Musaev, who expressed some doubt as to whether a Latin-based alphabet, championed by the majority, offered the best alternative to Cyrillic. Arguing that the social aspects of alphabet reform ought to be carefully considered, given that orthography was not simply a collection of abstract symbols, but a gateway to culture, Musaev opined:

> Latin'e geçmek kolay iş değil. Ülkenin psikolojisi konusu mühimdir. Kril'e geçerken Ruslaşma olmuştu. Şimdi Latin'e geçersek Avrupalaşacak mıyız?
>
> Switching to the Latin alphabet is not an easy business. A country's psychology is an important consideration. When we switched to the Russian alphabet, we were Russified. Now if we switch to the

Latin alphabet will we be Europeanized?

Musaev's unease regarding the wisdom of abandoning one orthographic system in favor of another and concern over the potential implications of such a decision on Turkic culture thus serves as evidence of the relevance of a hegemonic belief in the agency exerted by orthography over social identity to the question of orthographic unification in the Turkic world. This, in turn, may serve to explain why some advocates of adopting a Latin-based common orthography were at pains to suggest that the Latin alphabet was not "foreign" to the Turkic peoples. This was predominantly accomplished by recalling early nineteenth century movements among the Azeris and other Turkic peoples. Thus, Kazakh delegate to ICTAS Kenesbay Musaev, for one, characterized the adoption of the Latin script as returning to an old alphabet rather than implementing a new one: "*Bu Latin alfabesine geçmek değil, eski yazıya geri dömektir.*" ("This not passing to the Latin alphabet, it is returning to the old writing"). Other attempts were, however, made to reach even further back in history in an effort to prove that the Latin alphabet was organic to the Turkic languages. Thus, as the momentum toward the adoption of Latin-based alphabets across the Central Asia republics appeared to be waning, Turkish delegate to the PTLC, Ahmet Temir, argued:

Tarihte Latin harfleri Türk dillerine tamamiyle yabancı değildir. Meselâ 1303 tarihinde Karadenizin kuzeyinde Kıpçak bozkırlarında	Historically, the Latin letters are not completely foreign to the Turkic languages. For example, we have come across some works written

kaleme alınmı- olan Codex Cumanicus gibi Latin harfleriyle yazılmış olan bazı eserlere de rastlanmaktayız.	with the Latin letters like the Codex Cumanicus which was written in 1303 [sic] in the Qipcaq steppes north of the Black Sea.

While true that the *Codex Cumanicus*, which described the language of the Cumans, a nomadic Turkic people belonging to the western Eurasian Turkic tribes, was written in the Latin script, it is also true that the text was prepared by non-Cumans, predominantly German missionaries, to aid religious, political, and trade relations. Thus, it is hardly accurate to equate the Latin script with the Cuman people, who in fact relied on variants of a Turkic runic script resembling the Orhun-Yenisey script of their eastern counterparts for their literary needs (Golden 1992). Nonetheless this brief mention of an ancient text in which the language of a Turkic peoples was rendered in a Latin-based script served to suggest that the script was not "foreign" but rather "natural" to the Turkic peoples and, as such, its adoption would not entail "Europeanization" or the concomitant loss of Turkic culture. In other words, the Latin letter would not exert "foreign" orthographic agency on the Turkic peoples.

The notion that orthography acts both as a symbol of social identity and an agent in its production was furthermore evident in the interest among some delegates to the congresses in reviving the runic Orhun-Yenisey script of the ancient Göktürks, and indeed the language itself. Despite being recognized as impractical, this uniquely Turkic orthography was appealing insofar as it represented a return to the script of the ancient Turkic peoples and, by extension, the essence of Turkic culture, thereby allowing the effects of intervening linguistic and cultural imperialism to be shed, while simultaneously

preventing the further loss of linguistic and cultural integrity perceived to be the foregone conclusion of voluntary adoption of another foreign script. Noting that different alphabets had served the Turkic languages at various historical junctures, ICTAS delegate from Kazakhstan Erden Kacibekov recommended adoption of the Latin alphabet for the foreseeable future for reasons of expedience and practicality, but also suggested that work should begin as soon as possible to prepare for the eventual adoption of the Orhun-Yenisey script. Specifically, he argued that:

> Bir zamanlar Arap alfabesi bizim için en uygun alfabe oldu ama şimdi Latin alfabesinden başka çare yok. Bunu çok çabuk halletmemiz gerek. Kazakıstan, Tatarıstan, Özbekistan 1992-1995 arasında Latin alfabesine geçmeyi başaracak ama çok daha ilerde Orhun alfabesine geçmek şart. Bunun için şimdiden çalışmalara başlamak lâzım.
>
> At one time the Arabic alphabet was the most appropriate alphabet for us, but now there is no option other than the Latin alphabet. We must resolve this very quickly. Kazakhstan, Tataristan, and Uzbekistan will succeed in passing to the Latin alphabet by between 1992 and 1995, but in the distant future, we must pass to the Orhun alphabet. We must start working on this now.

Kacibekov's compatriot Amantay Torgaev expanded on this point, noting that the decision to support one alphabet over another was political rather than pragmatic in nature and implying that true unity among the Turkic peoples would come only from teaching the Orhun language--and by implication, its associated script-- rather than continuing to school children in the modern Turkic languages, which served only to divide them from one another. He argued:

Latin harflerini çok methettik. Başka alfabe olsa onu da methederdik. Kırk-elli yıl çok eser Rus harfleri ile verildi. Kazaklar için tâ 1901'de bile Rus alfabesi yaratılmıştı. Bunun siyasetle ilgisi vardır…. Mekteplerde değişik Türk dilleri okutmak yerine (çok ders olur idi) eski Orhun dilini okutsak daha yerine olurdu.	We have greatly praised the Latin letters. Had it been another alphabet, we would have extolled that. In 40-50 years many works have been produced with the Russian letters. Even as far back as 1901 a Russian alphabet was created for Kazakhs. This is related to politics…. It would be much more fitting if in place of teaching the various Turkic languages in the schools we taught the ancient Orhun language.

At the root of such arguments lay the notion that the only orthography around which the Turkic world could ultimately coalesce was the uniquely Turkic Orhun-Yenisey script and the concomitant belief that until the Turkic peoples could muster the collective social, political, and economic strength to support transition to such an orthographic system, they would be consigned to using a foreign alphabet to express themselves in writing, and it mattered little which of the remaining options were adopted for the meantime. This sentiment once again reflects the notion of orthographic agency--i.e., the belief that use of the Orhun-Yenisey script, insofar as it represented the worldview of the original Turkic peoples, could evoke a wider Turkic consciousness, reviving the unity of the contemporary Turkic peoples and restoring them to their former greatness. While the great Orhun-speaking Turkic society Torgaev envisioned stood in contrast to the Russian-speaking Turkic society Sanagulov decried, however, it also stood in contrast, pragmatically, if not ideologically, to the Turkish-speaking (*Türkçe-konuşan*)

Turkic world that organizers of the linguistic congresses hoped to establish, for while the Turks were equal inheritors of the Orhun legacy, and the very idea of a common Turkic script, regardless of the particulars of orthographic form, evoked notions of a great union of Turkic peoples, in pragmatic terms, any alphabet but one based on Latin characters would have realistically excluded the Anatolian Turks for whom the issue of alphabet had long since been settled and who, in the absence of domestic upheaval and a shift in political paradigm of the sort then faced by the Turkic peoples, were unlikely to entertain a wholesale revision of their over sixty-year-old script.

Among the Turkish delegates, who mostly observed a self-imposed limit in refraining from overtly recommending a specific orthographic system out of concern that it might be perceived as imposing a Turkish vision on the Turkic peoples, Turkish linguist Ahmet Temir came closest to recommending adoption of a Latin-based orthographic system when he predicted that Turkey's long-standing utilization of the Latin alphabet, as well as the script's widespread international use, would ultimately persuade the Turkic peoples to adopt it as well. Although insisting that his prediction should, in no way, be construed as an attempt to impose the Latin-based alphabet, Temir noted that he and his fellow countrymen nonetheless cherished the hope that the Turkic peoples would see the value of adopting the Latin alphabet. He argued:

> [K]anaatimizce Türkiye'nin Latin alfabesi kullanması diğer Türk Dünyasını da Latin alfabesi üzerinde etkileyecektir. Ama biz
>
> [I]n our opinion, Turkey's use of the Latin alphabet will have an effect on the rest of the Turkic world also using the Latin alphabet.

burada bunu zorla empoze etmiyoruz. Yalnız her bakımdan, bütün dünyanın kullanmış olması bakımından, Türkiye'de de Latin alfabesi hala devam ettiğine göre, diğer Türk boylarının da herhalde bu istikamette bir karara varacaklarını tahmin ediyoruz, ümid ediyoruz.	But we are not here imposing this by force. It's just that from every perspective, insofar as the whole world already uses it, and considering that the Latin alphabet is still going strong in Turkey, we predict that the other Turkic peoples will also likely arrive at the same conclusion, indeed we hope so.

Thus, despite the care with which Turkish organizers and participants avoided giving the impression that the early linguistic congresses were convened with the purpose of compelling the Turkic peoples to accept a Latin-based alphabet, it nonetheless became increasingly clear that the Latin orthography, although originally foreign, had become so integral to Turkish national identity that, practically speaking, it represented the only orthographic system among those forwarded by the delegates that possessed the necessary agentive power to bring about the creation of a cohesive Turkic world that, in encompassing Turkey, could truly be considered pan-Turkic. That this unspoken notion did, nonetheless, represent an underlying presumption behind the organization of the early linguistic congresses, does, however, become apparent in the fact that all seven of the *ortak alfabe* proposals presented as ICTAS drew to a close, six of which had been prepared by Turkic delegates, recommended Latin-based scripts. Indeed, it is fair to say that the delegates who presented such proposals had been invited to the congress precisely because they were working on Latin-based alphabet proposals in their respective countries, the hope being that these atomized efforts could be married up in creating a common Turkic alphabet.

In essence, then, the early linguistic congresses were not about linguistic and orthographic rapprochement *among* the Turkic peoples, but rather about effecting the rapprochement of the Turkic peoples *with* Turkey through the adoption of a Latin-based orthographic system that took Turkey's alphabet as its base. Returning then to Fishman's (1993b) "Language Y" factor, we find that more than Russian, Arabic, Orhun, or the "European languages" and their associated scripts, it is Turkish and the Latin-based Turkish alphabet that lurk behind discussions over the structure and form of a common Turkic alphabet. While within the context of the wider Turkic world, the Turkish language and alphabet were ostensibly just another of the "X" languages, equally involved in the mutual constitution of linguistic and sociocultural unification across the Turkic world, Turkey's established orthography, not to mention its sociopolitical stability, not only lent its orthography special status among the "X" languages, but also put it into the "Y" language category, rendering the Latin orthography, and, by implication, the Turkish alphabet, the unspoken "standard" against which *ortak alfabe* options were measured. The special status accorded the Turkish alphabet, became particularly clear during discussions surrounding the seven *ortak alfabe* proposals that were focused on reaching final consensus on the official form the *ortak alfabe* would take, in which a recognition of the unspoken hierarchies of power that lay beneath the putative "commonality" of the Turkic peoples began to emerge.

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF A COMMON ALPHABET

At this juncture it is logical to ask how, given such deep ideological divides over the creation of a common Turkic orthography, it was conceivable that the delegates to ICTAS could come to consensus on an actual *ortak alfabe* proposal. The answer to this question, I would argue, lies in the overarching political economy of linguistic unification in the post-Soviet Turkic world during its early days, for, as the discourse of delegates to the early linguistic congresses makes clear, in addition to being invested with symbolic power and social agency in the production of identity, orthography was believed to possess both mediated and unmediated political and economic power in the material world, by virtue of granting privileged access to more powerful nations and their political and economic resources. In so arguing, I am drawing from Bourdieu's (1991) suggestion, as well as elaborations on his theory (Gal 1989, Irvine 1989), that language choices and linguistic practices are symbolic capital that can be converted to social, political, and economic capital. In this sense, the dimensions of orthographic choice in the post-Soviet Turkic world reflected an implicit understanding of differences in social, political, and economic standing hidden beneath explicit discourses of commonality amongst the Turkic peoples. More to the point, it reflected an understanding on the part of the Turkic delegates that Turkey occupied a unique position among the Turkic nations by virtue of its status as an established and respected independent modern nation-state, thereby granting Turkey prestige within the Turkic world derived largely from its economic footing as well as its social and political standing within the broader international community.

In exploring the overarching political economy of the post-Soviet Turkic world in its early days, it is thus expedient to return to the question of what the Turkic delegates hoped might be achieved from their involvement in the early linguistic congresses. Beyond nostalgic feelings of kinship, there was an initial hope among the Turkic delegates that a union of Turkic peoples along the lines of the European Union would give weight to the notion of their belonging to a broad peoplehood distinct from the collective Soviet identity they had been ascribed and thus, although in a seemingly contrary sense, bolster their nascent national claims. As ICTAS delegate from Kazakhstan Erden Kacibekov noted: "Unity is necessary in economic, scientific, political, and cultural areas. Even Europe united. We're late in this regard. The matter of alphabet must be resolved as quickly as possible" ("*Ekonomik, ilmî, politik, kültür sahasında birlik gerek. Avrupa bile birleşti. Biz bu konuda geç kaldık. Alfabe meselesi en kısa zamanda halledilmeli*").

As such, while largely preoccupied, as described above, with concerns of an existential nature that bespoke an engrossing engagement with issues of national identity formation within a supranational context, the Turkic delegates also demonstrated an underlying concern for pragmatic political and economic issues also perceived to impinge on national autonomy, especially as the conference wore down and the time drew near for deciding on an actual *ortak alfabe* proposal. In this sense, despite the unresolved status of national orthographic reform and identity politics in the Central Asian republics, and in spite of concerns over the potential for foreign orthographic systems to extend cultural hegemony and stymie independent identity formation among the Turkic peoples, there

was palpable feeling among the Turkic delegates to the early linguistic congresses that orthographic rapprochement and eventual linguistic unity amongst the Turkic peoples, particularly a union that included Turkey, would provide some measure of protection of their national autonomy by acting, if not as an antidote to Soviet linguistic manipulation, then at least as a prophylaxis against future Russian attempts at linguistic, social, and political intrigue within a region that Russia still considered its "backyard."

By extension, it was generally acknowledged by Turkic delegates that arriving at consensus on a common alphabet and finding a way to implement it as quickly as possible was of paramount importance. In this sense, even Erden Kacibekov, whose statement in favor of the eventual adoption of the Orhun-Yenisey script is discussed above, in recognition of the conflict between the time, effort and economic resources required to resuscitate the ancient runic script and the need to adopt a common alphabet as quickly as possible to mitigate against immediate political exigencies, recommended implementing an interim Latin-based orthography. Fellow ICTAS delegate Rafael Muhammetdinov, however, best summarized this political perspective on the necessity of devising a common script and urgency of adopting it, arguing:

> Sovyetler Birliği adlı imparatorluk dağıldı. Şimdi Rusya adlı yeni bir imparatorluk var ve henüz ayağa kalkmadı. Bunun tekrar canlanmasına kadar çok az vaktimiz var. Şu fırsattan faydalanarak bize derhal, kısa vakit içinde bir unifikasyonlu (ortak) alfabe kurmak
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> The empire known as the Soviet Union has collapsed. Now there is a new empire known as Russia and it has not yet risen. We have very little time before it again comes to life. Using this opportunity, it is necessary for us to establish a unifying, common alphabet at once

lazımdır. Eğer biz şimdi yetişemezsek sonra Yeltsin imparatorluğu sağlamlaşacak, kuvvetlenecek ve [Türk cumhuriyetler] bihassa Rusya içindeki muhtar cumhuriyetler çok ağır durumda kalacaklardır. Bunun için çok acele etmemiz gerekmektedir…. Türk alfabesi lokomotif gibi değişik Türk boylarını peşinden çekmelidir.	and within a short period of time. If we don't achieve this now, then the Yeltsin Empire will gather its strength, become more powerful and [the Turkic republics] especially those autonomous republics inside Russia, will remain in a very difficult situation. For these reasons, we must make great haste…. The Turkic alphabet must, like a locomotive, pull the various Turkic tribes behind it.

Thus, with the understanding that the Latin-based alphabet was the sole viable option for pan-Turkic unity and with the creation of a common Turkic alphabet explicitly recognized as politically beneficial, the only question that remained as ICTAS drew to a close was whether the *ortak alfabe* should, in view of post-Soviet exigencies, simply replicate Turkey's alphabet, or in a nod to nationalist sentiment, allow for different and/or additional characters and hence some measure of national distinctiveness. In such deliberations, economic considerations were key, as many delegates noted, because switching to a new alphabet was an expensive proposition and one which none of the Turkic peoples had the financial wherewithal to accomplish independently, at least in the short term. In that sense, adopting the Turkish alphabet set the stage for the Turkic peoples to most effectively benefit from direct material aid the Turkish state could provide in the form of not only typewriters, printing presses, etc., but also educational materials, literature, and newspapers--in short, the panoply of interrelated equipment and materials necessary for the Turkic peoples to successfully abandon the Cyrillic alphabet and free themselves from Russian linguistic imperialism.

As a result, some delegates did suggest outright adoption of the Turkish alphabet, at least for an initial transition period, arguing that it would ensure the availability of material resources necessary to effect the primary goal of Latinization. As the argument went, once Latinization had been achieved and the independent Turkic republics had found their financial footing, correctives to the individual Turkic alphabets could then be made to better represent the unique phonology of each language. One such proposal was advanced by Turkmen delegate to ICTAS, Cebbar Göklenov, who, in spite of earlier comments asserting the need for an alphabet that would remedy the damage done to the Turkmen language by the Soviet-imposed alphabet's inability to represent key features of Turkmen phonology, nonetheless suggested that, in light of economic exigencies, the Turkish alphabet should be adopted for an interim period, arguing: "In passing to the Latin alphabet, we must pass to the Latin alphabet in use in Turkey, because we have no material opportunities. We can make use of those from Turkey" (*"Latin alfabesine geçerken Türkiye'deki Latin'e geçmek şart, çünkü bizim maddî imkânımız yok. Türkiye'den yararlanabiliriz"*). Thus, arguments in favor of accepting the Turkish alphabet, if only on a temporary basis and for reasons of expediency, hinged on an explicit recognition of Turkey's superior economic power and the material aid it could supply.

Nonetheless, there were indications among other Turkic delegates of alternate assessments of the political economy involved in adopting the Turkish alphabet. For these delegates, the issue of national autonomy was of sufficient significance to dictate against, if not the Latin-based orthographic system itself, then at least against adopting

the Turkish alphabet as the *ortak alfabe*. Azerbaijani linguist/parliamentarian Feridun Celilov, for one, was unequivocal in recommending against adopting the 29-letter, Latin-based Turkish alphabet in deference to national distinctiveness, arguing:

> Alfabe ince meseledir. Türklerle bir halk olsak dahi söyleme farklılıklarımız var ve biz bunları muhafaza etmek isteriz. Türk alfabesinin aynısını kabul edemeyiz.
>
> Alphabet is a delicate matter. If we are one people with the Turks, it is also fair to say that we have differences and we want to protect them. We cannot adopt an identical Turkish alphabet.

That it was an Azeri delegate who took this stand is not surprising, for preservation of national orthographic distinctiveness was of particular importance to many Azerbaijani delegates, who, like most Azeri linguists and language professionals, regarded their country, rather than Turkey, as the historic vanguard of alphabet reform. Specifically, Azerbaijan's 1919 adoption of the Latin-based *son Türk alfabesi*, its 1922 implementation of the Latin-based *yeŋi Turq əlifbası*, and its role in hosting the 1926 Baku Turcology Congress the Latin-based Unified Turkic Alphabet (*Birləşdirilmiş Jeni Tyrk Əlifbasь*) it promoted was officially adopted by the Turkic peoples were points of national pride, and Azerbaijani scholars and politicians rarely missed an opportunity to highlight the role their country had played in the history of linguistic unification amongst the Turkic peoples and to emphasize that Azerbaijan's involvement in orthographic reform predated that of Turkey. In the words of Azerbaijani delegate to the ICTAS, Alovset Abdullaev:

Türkiye bu alfabeye bizden sonra katıldı…. Demokratik Azerbaycan Cumhuriyeti zamanında (1918-1920) 1919'da Abdulla Bey Efendizade'nin projesi ile onu parlemento kabul etmişti. "Son Türk Alfabesi" adını taşıyor ve 1919'da Bakü'de basıldı. Bize Türkiye demedi biz Türkiye'den önce Latin'i kabul ettik.	Turkey joined in on this [Latin] alphabet after us…. During the Democratic Azerbaijan Republic (1918-1920), parliament accepted [the Latin alphabet] with Abdulla Bey Efendizade's project. It carried the name, "The Final Turkish Alphabet" and was printed in 1919 in Baku. Turkey didn't tell us [to do so], we adopted the Latin before Turkey.

Moreover, of all the Turkic republics, Azerbaijan was best positioned to assert its desire to forge an independent orthographic future. Proponents of reprising Azerbaijan's former Latin alphabet had effectively appealed to nationalist popular sentiment which was especially high in the wake of a brutal January 1990 crack-down on mass protests demanding independence from the Soviet Union, and hence public support was largely behind the effort. In fact, the Azerbaijani parliament had been poised to bring the issue of national alphabet to an official vote in March of 1991 (Landau and Kellner-Heinkele 2001), but the parliamentary decision was postponed in deference to Azerbaijani scholars wishing to take part in the *ortak alfabe* discussions. In the minds of the Azeri delegates, the path had been set for the adoption of a modified Azeri alphabet, as Alaeddin Aliev implied when he stated that the vast majority of Azeris wished "to return to the alphabet that was used between 1928 and 1940--the 29 letters of Turkish with three additional letters tacked on" (*"1928-1940'ta kullanılan alfabeye dönmek istiyoruz--Türkçe'de 29 harf ilavesiyle.")*, and their participation in the early linguistic congresses was simply to

designed to assess whether Azerbaijan could reprise its 1926 role at the vanguard of orthographic reform. Thus, in Celilov's words: "The decision to wait for the results of the present symposium was made in view of the probability that the Tatars, Turkmen, and other Turkic peoples would adopt that which the Azeris had adopted" (*"Azerilerin kabul ettiklerini Tatar, Türkmen ve başkaları kabul etmemeleri ihtimali yüzünden buradaki sempozyumun neticelerinini beklemeye karar verildi."*). In this sense, as confirmed in later interviews, Celilov and his fellow Azerbaijan delegates had made the calculation that the social and political capital that would accrue domestically by capitalizing on nationalist sentiment in reinstating a former symbol of Azerbaijan's brief period of independence in the pre-Soviet era and the social and political capital that might thus be translated into within the international sphere (for Western interest in Azerbaijan's reputed petrocarbon reserves had already begun) outweighed what economic benefit might result from material aid from the Turkish state. Indeed, by participating in the early linguistic congresses, Azerbaijani delegates had merely hoped to increase Azerbaijan's national prestige by reprising their role at the orthographic vanguard of a broader Turkic world.

In the end, of the seven *ortak alfabe* proposals presented by delegates to ICTAS, it was the one presented by a Turkish linguist, Ahmet Temir, that was accepted. Whereas the other six proposals presented included letters not found in modern Turkish (e.g., *ä*, *ñ*, *č*, *š*, *ž*, *é*, *ĭ*, and *ķ*), some of which replaced letters already in use in Turkish (e.g., *š* was to replace *ş* and *č* to replace *ç*) while others sought to account for extant phonological variance among the Turkic language, to greater or lesser degrees, by representing sounds

not represented in the modern Turkish alphabet, Temir's proposal was for a thirty-four character alphabet, based on the 29-letter Turkish script with five additional characters (*ä*, *x*, *q*, *ñ*, and *w*) that represented phonemes common to many of the Turkic languages but absent in modern standard Turkish. This, then, was to be the official *ortak alfabe*, which was to be taught across the Turkic world as a "*lingua franca* of Turkic orthography," and from which the various Turkic peoples were to choose appropriate letters in creating their individual national languages.

Thus, while the Latin-based common alphabet did allow for a measure of national distinctiveness, it was nonetheless to unite the Turkic peoples largely under the rubric of an alphabet that had long been associated with Turkish national identity. Given the understanding of orthographic agency prevalent among the Turkic peoples, it was only natural that this was to raise concerns that adoption of the *ortak alfabe* would result in their "becoming" Turks and hence losing their national distinctiveness. Although this concern remained unvoiced, as such, during the early linguistic congresses, it was to play a key role in the fate of the *ortak alfabe* in their aftermath. In short, as several Turkic delegates to ICTAS later opined, while the agreed-upon alphabet proposal, in accounting for extant sociopolitical exigencies, may have offered the soundest linguistic solution to the difficulty of linguistic variance, it ultimately fell short in satisfying existential concerns over national distinctiveness. In a sense, then, this compromise solution traded the long-term ambition of true orthographic unity for the short-term objective of Latinizing the Turkic alphabets around the already established Turkish alphabet. As a

result, it proved insufficient to encourage the Turkic peoples to adopt national alphabets in keeping with the *ortak alfabe*.

The months subsequent to the congresses saw the proposed *ortak alfabe* fail to gain traction in national deliberations over orthography among the Turkic peoples, thereby consigning the *ortak alfabe* to the dust bin of history, and effectively halting all incipient work toward the more complicated, and thus sure to have been even more fractious, effort to create an *ortak dil*. Although the first Latin alphabet adopted in Azerbaijan a month after the conclusion of ICTAS on 25 December 1991 was, in fact, based on the *ortak alfabe* proposal (the twenty nine letters of the Turkish alphabet plus *ä*, *x*, and *q*), the desire for national distinctiveness evident in the discourse of the country's delegates to the early linguistic congresses led the Azerbaijani government's language advisory board to recommend replacing the letter *ä* with the letter *ə* in what was described to me as a move designed not only to mark Azerbaijan's orthographic independence but also, in a nod to history, to demonstrate the country's continuing position at the vanguard of orthographic issues, it being a character from the Latin-based "new Turkish alphabet" ("*yeŋi Turq əlifbası"*) implemented in Azerbaijan in 1922 and that served as the base for the Unified Turkic Alphabet (*Birləşdirilmiş Jeni Tyrk Əlifbasь*) adopted at the 1926 Baku Turcology Congress.[48] Thus, it quickly became clear that nationalist impulses had trumped supranationalist sentiment in national deliberations

[48] Note here that the inclusion of the letter *ə* on the reverse of the contemporary Azerbaijani five manat bill is meant to represent Azerbaijan's national distinctiveness, alphabet and currency both being symbolic of the nation (c.f., footnote 43).

over alphabet and that the Turkic peoples would chart their own orthographic course in the post-Soviet era.

IDEOLOGICAL PRESUMPTIONS IN THE FRAMING THE CONGRESSES IN THEIR AFTERMATH

At the outset of this chapter, I made initial mention of some issues regarding the production of the transcribed "text" upon which the proceeding analysis of the discursive dynamics of the early Turkic linguistic congresses would be based. Returning to that issue, let me now make a few relevant points concerning the congresses proceedings as "text," particularly with regard to the audio recordings having been transcribed in modern standard Turkish, that will both expand our understanding of the unspoken enabling presuppositions of the early linguistic congresses which ultimately led to the failure of the *ortak alfabe* and *ortak dil* projects. From this perspective, transcription of the proceedings in Turkish was striking because although, as Turcologists, many of the Turkic delegates would, at that time, have possessed a "book" knowledge of Turkish, from interactions and interviews with them, I can attest that their spoken facility in modern Turkish, even several years after the congresses, was not at the level represented in the conference proceedings.[49] Indeed, my own experience would suggest that even

[49] This, then, may account for a second peculiarity of the transcripts, namely the numerous lacunae […] in the transcriptions, presumably where the Turkish-speaking transcriber was unable to understand what was being said and hence translate/transcribe it into Turkish.

when speaking Turkish instead of their native Turkic language, the speech of delegates was punctuated by native expressions, archaic terms, and Russian loanwords, which were generally attributable to an incomplete knowledge of modern Turkish.

Occasionally, however, such lexical or syntactical choices seemed deliberate, marking, for example, a preference for an Arabic loanword still in use in their native languages but "artificially" purged from modern Turkish, which thus served as ideological commentary on the political, and hence "linguistically haphazard," nature of the Turkish linguistic reforms and the consequent "superiority of their respective native languages. While from the perspective of discourse analysis, such "disfluencies" would have allowed for a detailed examination of the ways in which language ideology was instantiated in actual discursive practice, from the perspective of producing a historical record of the events, they served only to detract from a general understanding of the propositional content of the discourse. In this sense, the decision to erase the accidental or deliberate "disfluencies" of "non-native" speakers by transcribing /translating their discourse in/to standard Turkish, although reflective of an "assumption that utterances are pieces of information [which], in turn, assumes that language is used to express ideas" (Ochs 1979:46), and hence a pragmatic decision insofar as the proceedings were published in Turkey and aimed at a Turkish audience, also represented an ideological choice that served to perpetuate one of the enabling presuppositions of the early linguistic congresses, namely a conviction in mutual intelligibility among the Turkic languages ("after all, they speak just like we do"), but in a way that once again suggests that, from a Turkish perspective, linguistic rapprochement in the Turkic world was largely conceived

of as unidirectional, involving the rapprochement of the Turkic languages and their speakers *toward* Turkish.

Moreover, the decision to transcribe/translate in modern standard Turkish speaks volumes about the issue of language status, suggesting an unspoken, and perhaps largely unacknowledged, belief in the "superiority" of Turkish that echoes Minister Zeybek's choice, in his opening remarks to the FTLC, to refer to the Turkic languages all as *Türkçe*. This presumption of "superiority," which I was to encounter frequently in both overt and covert form throughout my fieldwork, was understandably distasteful to the Turkic peoples, who, as became increasingly clear in the aftermath of the congresses, harbored their own notions of the "superiority" of their native Turkic languages to Turkish. As such, it served as a "disenabling" presupposition which mitigated against not only the ultimate success of the *ortak alfabe* and *ortak dil* projects, and hence linguistic rapprochement, but also the sociocultural union of Turkic peoples envisioned by the organizers of the projects.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, let us return for a moment to the main enabling presuppositions around which the early linguistic congresses were organized, namely a conviction in the underlying mutual intelligibility of the Turkic languages, a belief in the linguistic, social, political, and even economic advantages to supranational unification among the Turkic peoples, and a certainty in the power of the agency inherent to orthography to unite the

Turkic peoples under the rubric of the "Turkic world." Seen from a historical perspective, these are the very same linguistic beliefs that underpinned earlier efforts by Ismail Gaspirali to promote "unity in language, thought, and action" (*"dilde, fikirde, işte birlik"*) among the Turkic peoples in the pre-Soviet era. In the absence of contact between the Anatolian Turks and the Soviet Turkic peoples during the Cold War era, these potent linguistic ideologies had taken on an almost mythologized stature, and it was thus under their auspices that the Turkic peoples convened to discuss the creation of a common Turkic alphabet and *lingua franca* in the early days of the post-Soviet era.

Given that conflicts in language ideologies are most evident when they are "embodied by overtly contending groups" (Kroskrity 2000a:8), it would seem to follow that a series of discursive events ostensibly organized around shared principles and a commitment to cooperation, such as the early Turkic congresses, would manifest relatively little ideological conflict. In actuality, however, these events, convened with the intent of removing what was commonly understood to be artificial and externally-imposed barriers to written communication, proved surprisingly fraught with ideological divides. As became increasingly clear during the course of the congresses, particularly in the discourse that emerged during discussion and debate over the form the *ortak alfabe* should take, the root of such conflict lay in varying interpretations of ostensibly shared ideologies that had shifted in the absence of contact, taking on a hue specific to the divergences in the respective historical experiences of the Anatolian Turks and ex-Soviet Turkic peoples.

The intense metalinguistic contact fostered by the early linguistic congresses, as bounded discursive events focused on issues of linguistic planning, was thus key to the emergence of ideological conflict that revealed evolving differences in the "linguistic cultures" of the Anatolian Turks and the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples, including, most potently, their respective understandings of the role of language in social consolidation and the relationship between nationalism and supranationalism. In moments of contact, Makihara and Schieffelin suggest, "[i]t is often not only difference in codes and problems in translating between them that make understanding difficult, but ideas about the nature of language itself or its functions which, when taken for granted on one side and unimagined or even unimaginable on the other lead to the misrecognition of meaning and even intentions" (2007:13-14). In this sense, conceptualizing the various Turkic languages as one language through discourses of mutual intelligibility proved insufficient to overcome emergent, discrepant language ideologies which, while rooted in the divergent histories of the Turkic peoples, simultaneously informed their contemporary sociopolitical yearnings and objectives.

In the end, then, the one "shared" presupposition that remained intact at the conclusion of the congresses was the conviction in the latent mutual intelligibility of the Turkic languages, although even this hallowed belief was to come under question in their aftermath. Thus, although concerns of a pragmatic nature that bespoke calculations concerning the political economy of the post-Soviet environment in its early days allowed the delegates to come to consensus regarding the orthographic system upon which the ortak alfabe should be based and the form it would take, discrepancies in ideology and

intent between the Anatolian Turks and the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples ultimately dictated the abandonment of the *ortak alfabe* and *ortak dil* projects and the failure of broader efforts to effect the eventual sociocultural and political rapprochement among the Turkic peoples envisioned by the organizers of the early linguistic congresses.

Returning then to the notion that linguistic ideologies are not only constituted by but also constitutive of the social world and that changes in linguistic attitudes, values, and beliefs thus have the potential to reflect, reinforce, and potentially revolutionize "presuppositions about social relations and social relations themselves," (Makihara and Schieffelin 2007:5), I would note that since language ideologies mediate between linguistic practice and the social world, their revelation bespeaks the existence of the broader social ideologies in which they are rooted. In the case of the Turkic world, the emergence of discrepant linguistic ideologies masked by explicit discourses of mutual intelligibility highlighted unspoken notions of sociocultural "superiority" which were to plague broader efforts aimed at fostering sociocultural and geopolitical rapprochement and unification among the Turkic peoples and thus call into question the notion of a cohesive "Turkic world."

Finally, in summarizing the larger contribution of this chapter to scholarship in language ideologies, I would point to an article by Blommaert that, in laying out "target domains for the analysis of language ideological debates," suggests that we consider language policy and planning, the role of language in nation-building processes, language and symbolic power, language change, the nature of politics as a discursive process, and the historical processes that contribute to the articulation of ideology and ideological

processes (1999:30). In this sense, through an exploration of the ideological dimensions and political economy considerations of a collective attempt to create a common Turkic alphabet and *lingua franca* which, in countering the effects of linguistic shift, was to supersede nationalist divisions between the Turkic peoples with supranationalist unification among them, with a particular focus on the emergent discrepancies in interpretation of ostensibly shared linguistic attitudes, values, and beliefs upon which the endeavor ultimately foundered, this study offers salient insights into each of these important domains of interest in language ideology scholarship.

Chapter Four: Language or Dialect? Turk or Turkic?: Negotiating the Dimensions of Shared Identity in the Turkic World

The competing ideas [within the Turkic world] of local territorial nation versus common shared identity as Turks find their resonance today in the attempts by many newly-independent states to revise or (re)create their national myths, while at the same time other groups reexamine the shared linguistic, cultural, and historical heritage that is readily apparent to most Turks…. It must be said that while the newly-independent states tend to focus on (re)building their new nations, they are sometimes resentful of the message that there is no difference between the Turks of Turkey and the Turks of Central Asia, the Caucasus, and other regions, or that the Turks of Turkey should play a role of leadership among all the Turks. For this reason communication between members of all the various groups of Turks is all the more important.

Uli Schamiloglu
Introduction to Turkistan news and discussion group, 1997[50]

A language is a dialect with an army and navy.

Max Weinreich

Language is an instrument of communication as well as ex-communication.

Lynda Mugglestone (1995:70)

INTRODUCTION

In previous chapters, I have described the enthusiasm with which the collapse of the Soviet Union was met by the Turkic peoples on both sides of the Iron Curtain and the subsequent reinitiation of contact between the Anatolian Turks and their Turkic counterparts in early quasi-official, bilateral efforts aimed at unifying the Turkic peoples linguistically and culturally through the creation of a common Turkic alphabet. While

[50] Quote taken from Uli Schamiloglu's Introduction to Turkistan.Newsletter found at: http://web.archive.org/web/19990117000239/http://www.euronet.nl/users/sota/turkistan.htm, last accessed August 2, 2011.

the *ortak alfabe* project initially seemed to hold the promise that the Turkic peoples would unite linguistically and coalesce socioculturally under the rubric of a Turkic world, this promise was to remain unfulfilled, as the zeal evinced on both sides fell victim, in relatively short order, to considerable controversy over the shape the imagined Turkic world community would take and in whose hands its stewardship would rest. As a result, progress toward linguistic, sociocultural, and geopolitical unification among the Turkic peoples, had effectively stalled by the mid-1990s. This chapter, then, explores the many issues involved in answering the question that members of the community of practice still committed to negotiating the dimensions of the Turkic world asked one another in the meeting halls of Turkic world events, the digital space of internet forums, and the pages of newspapers and journals during this phase of post-euphoric sobering, namely "What went wrong?"

Toward the end of the previous chapter, I noted that the orthographic decisions of the Turkic peoples in the wake of the early language congresses--whether to retain the Cyrillic, as in Kazakhstan, or to adopt a Latin-based alphabet that differed from the agreed-upon *ortak alfabe*, as in Azerbaijan--clearly demonstrated that nationalist impulses had trumped supranationalist sentiment in national deliberations over alphabet, and that independent orthographies would thenceforth serve as a symbol of the sovereignty and autonomy of the Turkic republics in the post-Soviet era. This clear demonstration of the Turkic peoples' commitment to national distinctiveness notwithstanding, it is important to note that debate over issues of orthography and language, in particular, and the future of linguistic and sociocultural rapprochement

among the Turkic peoples, more broadly, did not suddenly cease with the conclusion of the early linguistic congresses or the announcement of national orthographies by the Turkic peoples. Within the putative Turkic world at large, as well as the self-selected community of practice actively engaged in promoting Turkic rapprochement, such discussion continued apace, as the dimensions of relations among the Turkic peoples were renegotiated in light of earlier misunderstandings and missteps during this second stage of Turkic world relations.

While it is not difficult to conceptualize the series of early linguistic congresses discussed in the preceding chapter, collectively involving Turkish and Central Asian politicians, Turkish policy makers affiliated with the TDK and Central Asian members of their respective nations' language advisory boards, as well as linguists, Turcologists, and language professionals from throughout the Turkic world, as together constituting a prototypical example of "debate," or, more specifically, a language ideological debate, it is less immediately evident that the discussions, disputes, and verbal interplay revolving around related issues of language and orthography that emerged in the wake of the early linguistic congresses can be as easily captured within this paradigm. In arguing that such discursive and metadiscursive interactions can and, indeed, should be conceptualized as a diffuse and attenuated, but nonetheless loosely cohesive, debate, I return first to the widely accepted definition of "debate" Blommaert offers while initially proposing the advantages of focusing on language ideological debates as an entrée into developing a historiography of language ideologies:

> In the field of politics, discursive struggle and contestation are generically captured under the label of debate. The political process develops through a series of exchanges involving a variety of social actors: politicians and policy-makers themselves, academic and non-academic experts, interested members of the public, the media. Debates are, politically-ideologically, the points of entrance for civil society into policy-making: they are (seen as) the historical moments during which the polity gets involved in shaping policies (1999:8).

Notwithstanding the obvious utility of such a classic definition of the debate process in providing a framework for studying the more formal aspects of linguistic rapprochement in the post-Soviet Turkic world, I would suggest that the above description of the debate process, or the specific ways in which the "polity gets involved in shaping policies," represents an idealized, even utopian, perspective on the power dynamics inherent to formal debate, particularly as regards the means by which and the degree to which interested parties are empowered to partake and certain topics are either sanctioned or proscribed. Thus, for example, in the previous chapter's examination of the dynamics of the early linguistic congresses, I suggested that the dimensions of debate over a common Turkic alphabet, particularly as concerned the development of a concrete *ortak alfabe* proposal, were influenced, if not largely determined, by certain unspoken, ideological presumptions not only about orthography itself, but also about orthography's role in uniting the Turkic world, that were held by the Turkish organizers of the early linguistic congresses and ultimately influenced who was invited to participate in the debate. In this sense, although many of the delegates alluded to ongoing debates within their respective countries over four separate orthographic systems (Arabic, Cyrillic, Latin, and Orhun-Yenisey), even mentioning by name some of the scholars working on

proposals based on alternatives to a Latin-based script, such scholars were not in attendance, and arguments in support of such alternatives were thus not represented, at the early linguistic congresses, largely because they conflicted with the overarching Turkish objective of effecting the implementation of Latin-based alphabets across the Turkic world as a means of both drawing the Turkic peoples figuratively into Turkey's sphere of influence, and also thereby increasing Turkey's standing within the international community.

Moreover, casting further back in the history of orthographic reform in the Turkic world, I would suggest that although it is not possible from the historical record to determine with absolute surety whether the selection of participants in the 1926 Baku Turcology Congress was influenced by underlying ideological presuppositions, the overwhelming support for adopting a Latin-based alphabet as a first *ortak alfabe* for the Turkic peoples suggests it likely was. Turkish historian of the event, Bilâl Şimşir (1991) does indeed note that the intent of the Azerbaijani organizers of the congress was to highlight the benefits of a Latin-based script as a means of rallying support among the other Turkic peoples for an alphabet resembling that which the Azerbaijanis had themselves recently adopted, thereby presenting a *fait accompli* and a fortified front against prognosticated Bolshevik meddling. Thus, while admittedly neither a conclusive nor exhaustive survey, from these two exemplars of formal language ideological debate can nonetheless be abstracted the provisional thesis that involvement of "the polity" in formal debate is both limited and selective, which, in turn, begs the question as to the

degree to which "civil society," or the public writ large, is able to influence overt policy decisions within the framework of formal debate.

Although participant selectivity is the most obvious level at which ideologically "non-preferred" discourse was precluded from the early language congresses, I would argue that additional factors likewise contributed to limiting the emergence of diverse ideological perspectives. In this sense, while divergent viewpoints were hinted at, and, in some instances, even prefigured in the discourses of the early linguistic congresses, they were often explicitly voiced only retrospectively. With this in mind, I would like to recall a concept I alluded to at the end of the previous chapter and termed "the lacuna of the unspoken" to suggest here that the very fact that certain issues remained unvoiced during the early linguistic congresses implicitly reveals the power of interrelated political, pragmatic, and ideological forces in shaping the dimensions of debate. Thus, for example, the general discontentment of Turkic delegates with the contours of the Turkish alphabet was never explicitly voiced because, as was explained to me in retrospect, pointing to the deficiencies of the Turkish alphabet threatened to fracture the illusion of Turkic unity and cooperation and thus seemed to contravene the overarching ideological tenor of the congresses. Nonetheless, such dissatisfaction did exist and clearly played a role in the failure of the *ortak alfabe* to gain traction in national orthographic debates within the Turkic world that followed on the heels of the early language congresses, with the result that although the congresses concluded on a successful note, the consensus they fostered was a false consensus and hence failed to translate into actual adoption of the agreed-upon *ortak alfabe* proposal.

In this sense, I suggest that while the discourses of the early linguistic congresses offer a view into the pan-Turkic ideological presuppositions that underpinned their convention, the inability of the *ortak alfabe* to further linguistic rapprochement among the Turkic peoples, was largely rooted in, and is thus best understood from the "lacuna of the unspoken," or what was left *unsaid*, rather than what was said during the early linguistic congresses, and that, in turn, the "lacuna of the unspoken" is itself best discovered in the ambient discourses about issues of language, orthography, and identity in the Turkic world that emerged in the aftermath of the early linguistic congresses. In this sense, I suggest that, in contrast to the discourse of the congresses themselves, the ambient discourses that followed in their wake, not only enabled greater participation from civil society, but also, by virtue both of their less structured format and more diffuse nature, also allowed for greater freedom of participation, thereby encouraging the emergence of a range of divergent perspectives generally absent in more formal contexts. Thus, I argue that while less easily defined as a debate in the classic sense of the term, such ambient discourses nonetheless collectively constituted another influential, if atypical, instance of language ideological debate, which, in clarifying contentious issues of language, orthography, and identity generally left unsaid in more formal contexts, lends critical insight into broader issues of identity politics in the post-Cold War era Turkic world. In this sense, I expand on Blommaert's description of the often indeterminate nature of even prototypical examples of debate, of which he writes:

> Though there may be a prototypical perception of political debates, it is hard to provide conclusive criteria for identifying them, both in terms of discourse event-type (identities of participants, genres, time span, setting, etc.) and in terms of their relation to the outcome of decision-making procedures. They are patterns of interrelated discourse activities…often with a fuzzy beginning and end, of which we usually only remember the highlights, the most intense and polarized episodes (1998:9).

In depicting debates as "interrelated discourse activities" lacking in distinct onset and conclusion, Blommaert's description is reminiscent of Turan and Turan's characterization of the three phases in Turkic world relations (c.f., chapter one) as "fluctuations on a continuum" which nonetheless "reflect transformations of the outlooks that have given direction to the relationship" (1998:179). Although the two descriptions are of discrete phenomena and drawn from entirely different sources, the congruity between them is, I would suggest, not accidental, for when do debates arise but in times of social transformation, and what do they address themselves to but the dimensions of such transformation. In this sense, conceptualizing language ideological debates as indeterminate, blurred, or "fuzzy," around the edges suggests parallels between debates over language form, status, and usage that emerge during periods of transition (Annamalai 1979) such as prevailed following the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the broader sociopolitical milieu that not only frames such debates, but that is also constituted, at least in part, through the instrumentality of debate. Expanding on this notion, I would furthermore suggest that the ambient level of debate that exists within the interstices between "the most intense and polarized" and hence most memorable, episodic instances of debate on a particular topic, or, in other words, the indistinct, often unmarked

and unnoticed, periods of negotiated transformation that occur before metamorphosis into a new state is complete, may indeed constitute the best opportunity for discovering the unvarnished opinions and attitudes as well as the divergent interpretations of even shared ideological presuppositions that arise from the contestation and conflict inherent to the transformative process, yet, for a variety of reasons, often remain unspoken within the bounds of more formal contexts.

In this sense, it is essential to note the importance not only of explicit metadiscursive commentary on issues of language, orthography, and identity--represented throughout the chapter in carefully selected quotes culled from formal and informal discussions and interviews--but also of iterative, situated discursive and metadiscursive interaction--a phenomenon I have attempted to capture below through detailed description as well as the judicious inclusion of pertinent vignettes--in advancing not only my theoretical argument, but also the dynamics of ambient-level debate. Although necessarily limited in scope, and hence in their explanatory reach, not only are vignettes that elucidate explicit language attitudes held by Turks toward their Turkic counterparts exemplary of the dynamics of the ongoing debate, but, more importantly, they also played a key role in its progression in two key ways.

First, the interactions, misunderstandings, and overt contestation such vignettes describe were instrumental in creating a conducive environment for the broader ideological issues underpinning them to come to the fore in an explicit manner. In short, the sheer volume of interactions created a synergism by which the meaning extracted from each instance was extrapolated into abstracted axioms, or truisms, that were

generally believed to encapsulate the nature of linguistic and sociocultural relations in the Turkic world. Thus, by extension, it is important to note that I was by no means alone in my interest in vignettes of discursive and metadiscursive relations in the post-Cold War Turkic world. In their quest to discover where their vision of Turkic world unity had gone awry and gain insight into what might be done to correct course, members of the Turkic world community of practice likewise constituted interested observers of such interactions and, in discussing such issues amongst themselves, and with me, were often wont to offer vignettes of their own observation as a means of supporting their respective perspectives. In this way, the ambient discursive and metadiscursive interplay that characterized this second stage of Turkic world relations was reiteratively recycled in metalinguistic assessments of the state of linguistic rapprochement among the Turkic peoples, becoming part of the debate and thus enabling the public, even those members who claimed no special "interest" in the debate, to contribute, albeit indirectly, to its progression. It is in this way that the polity truly became involved in the parameters of debate, insofar as those in an actual position to participate in the debate over linguistic rapprochement in the Turkic world were a part of the polity and hence subject to its perceptions and prejudices.

THE INTERSECTING POLARITIES OF DEBATE

Given the difficulties inherent to making sense of diffuse "patterns of interrelated discourse activities" transcending national borders, emerging in disparate sites, spanning

many years, and involving individuals from across the social spectrum as a relatively cohesive and coherent debate over issues of language, orthography, and sociocultural identity, I suggest that organizing analysis of its various dimensions around a secondary theoretical paradigm may provide some relevant structure. Insofar as such ambient discourse activities largely revolved around linguistic rapprochement, or, language planning writ large, and its role in promoting social consolidation among the diverse Turkic peoples, the language planning literature, and in particular, Joshua Fishman's work in elucidating the ideological dimensions of language planning provides a useful inroads.

In a ground-breaking ethnology of corpus planning projects pursued throughout history and across the globe that reveals the hidden status agendas within even those aspects of language planning long considered to be purely linguistic, Fishman (2006) explores the underlying ideological breadth of extant language planning efforts, opposing and clustering the various dimensions he identifies to come to the conclusion that all language planning efforts are, at their ideological core, driven by one of two fundamental, yet contrasting, motivations--the desire for "independence" or the need for "interdependence." Although Fishman's model is based on the dynamics attendant to formal corpus planning efforts, it is my contention that the same ideological dimensions he describes are enacted, both metalinguistically and in praxis, within less formal contexts in the course of more mundane interactions in which language attitudes toward linguistic classification, identification, and management are revealed and that such interactions, in turn, inform the "more intense and polarized episodes" of debate that

surround more formal language planning efforts. In this sense, I take Fishman's model to a greater level of theoretical abstraction than he intended in developing it, while nonetheless remaining, I believe, within the "spirit" of his intent, namely to attend to the ideological valence inherent to efforts to negotiate social relationships through judicious language management. Furthermore, although Fishman's model of bipolar complexes describes separate and contrasting language planning efforts rather than opposing tendencies within the same putative effort, the broad ideological dimensions he identifies are indicative of approaches commonly taken in discursive negotiation and contestation over language and identity, and his paradigm thus serves as a springboard from which to examine the push-pull dynamics of linguistic and sociocultural rapprochement within the post-Cold War era Turkic world in which the dynamic tension between national "independence" and supranational "interdependence" is negotiated.

Of the individual ideological dimensions Fishman identifies, the bipolar complex comprised of the opposing tendencies of *Ausbau* ("building away"), or efforts by the "weaker" of adjacent related languages to emphasize dissimilarities in aid of linguistic "independence," and *Einbau* ("building toward"), or efforts, usually by the "stronger" of adjacent related languages, to emphasize similarities between the languages in aid of fostering "interdependence" is most directly relevant to the negotiation of linguistic rapprochement in the post-Cold War era. *Ausbau* efforts, which Fishman describes as widespread, often emerge in "cases in which the weaker of two neighboring languages that are very similar to one another undertakes…making itself as different from its neighbor as it ever can be" (2006:91). Of the opposing *Einbau* dimension, Fishman

offers no concrete examples, which seems to suggest that true *Einbau* efforts, are far less common, and that *Ausbau* efforts, rather than responding to an active *Einbau* campaign, are generally initiated on the basis of a *perception* by speakers of the "weaker" language that speakers of a closely related "stronger" language are attempting to incorporate or subsume the neighboring "weaker" language to their own. *Ausbau* efforts thus represent "a kind of 'autonomy motivated distancing' that believes that all of its problems [as] a weak language are derived from a 'big brother'[51] to which it is structurally, lexically, and in writing system very similar, indeed, so similar that its own independent status is thereby threatened" (Fishman 2006:91).

In this sense, the ideological tension between *Ausbau* and *Einbau* most commonly emerges in the perennial debate over "language versus dialect," in which it is to the advantage of speakers of the "stronger" of related languages to depict the "weaker" as a "dialect" either because, on the basis of the "one language/one nation" principle, to do so lays the foundation for speakers of the "stronger" language to incorporate the speakers of the "weaker" language and their territories under the rubric of the nation, or because, working on the "bigger is better" theorem, or the presumption that languages with greater numbers of speakers, even scattered across national boundaries, enjoy greater world standing, to claim related languages as "dialects" enhances the status of the "stronger"

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[51] The apparently widespread metaphor of the 'big brother' relationship of speakers of a "stronger" language to a "weaker" related language is certainly reflected in discourse over the dimensions of linguistic and sociocultural rapprochement in the Turkic world, in which Turks employ the term "*ağabey*" to demonstrate their willingness to take the Turkic peoples under their wing, and the Turkic peoples interpret the term as presumptuous and indicative of a Turkish sense of superiority (c.f., chapter two).

language. By contrast, in the drive for self-determination under the "one language/one nation" principle, it is to the advantage of speakers of the "weaker" of the two languages to resist efforts by the speakers of the "stronger" to depict their language as a dialect, or proactively preempt such attempts by declaring it an independent "language," thereby trading, from a political economy of language perspective, any boost in standing from association with a recognized world language for what status may accrue from being acknowledged as an admittedly small, but nonetheless sovereign, language.

Within the context of Turkic world relations, however, the debate over language versus dialect was more nuanced and complicated largely because the notion of linguistic rapprochement among the Turkic peoples seemed itself to be premised on the notion that the Turkic world could enjoy the international prestige associated with an emergent world language by boosting inherent similarities among the individual Turkic "languages" and collectively nudging them toward a common language which would then serve as a linguistic umbrella for the many distinct "dialects" that contributed to its creation. This was, however, a rather abstruse understanding of the relationship between "language" and "dialect" and popular use of the respective terms as well as language attitudes that underpinned them were more in keeping with traditional definitions, while even "expert" usages were wont to a certain degree of ambiguity and slippage.

In this sense, the post-Cold War Turkic world offers an unusual case study in the *Ausbau-Einbau* dynamic, not only because it commenced with an explicit *Einbau* effort, but because that effort itself, even if conceived, initiated, and organized by speakers of the "stronger" language, was, at least initially, bilateral in nature and spirit. Based on the

fundamental assumption of latent mutual intelligibility among the Turkic languages, participants in the early language congresses set about the process of creating a common Turkic alphabet which was to lead to the eventual formulation of a Turkic *lingua franca* designed to unite the Turkic peoples linguistically, socioculturally, and perhaps even geopolitically under the rubric of the Turkic world, and it was only after the reality of divergent understandings of the nature of the *Einbau* objectives surfaced that *Ausbau* reactions began to emerge. In this sense, an examination of the dimensions of Turkic world relations in the post-Cold War era enables a more nuanced theorization of the understudied *Einbau* dimension, by suggesting that *Einbau* efforts may not always be "cooptive," to neighboring languages, as suggested by its opposition to *Ausbau*, but also may be "cooperative" by nature, as were initial efforts to promote linguistic rapprochement within the Turkic world. In other words, to borrow the terms of high finance, *Einbau* efforts may, in some instances, be aimed at effecting a "merger" between the two parties rather than a "hostile takeover," and may thus be based in a sense of "equality" among partners rather than a sense of superiority over them.

It nonetheless remains possible, however, that an ostensibly "cooperative" *Einbau* effort might provoke an *Ausbau* reaction if speakers of the "stronger" language were to adopt a more "cooptive" attitude, or speakers of the "weaker" language were to perceive a covert "cooptive" intent behind a seemingly "cooperative" *Einbau* effort. The latter, I argue, was indeed what occurred vis-à-vis efforts to promote linguistic and sociocultural rapprochement in the post-Cold War era Turkic world, and the degeneration from a "cooperative" *Einbau* effort to a conflictual *Ausbau-Einbau* relationship in evidence

during the course of ambient-level debate that followed in the wake of the early linguistic congresses, was what ultimately spelled the failure not only of the *ortak alfabe* project, but also of the broader effort to unite the Turkic peoples under the rubric of the Turkic world.

LANGUAGE OR DIALECT: THAT IS THE QUESTION

While sociolinguists have long concerned themselves with developing theories and methodologies for distinguishing between languages and dialects (e.g., Ferguson 1966, Kloss 1967, and Stewart 1968), my concern in addressing the question as to whether the native tongues of the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples should be classified as languages or dialects lies less with the theoretical nuances of scientific classification than with exploring divergent speaker attitudes that surround local ideologies of linguistic taxonomy and the influence of such ideological preconceptions of linguistic status on emergent relations within the post-War era Turkic world. Working from a basic presumption in the fundamental arbitrariness of linguistic classification, I follow Chomsky in pointing to the sociopolitical nature of sociolinguistic "abstractions" and "idealizations" that, for example, encourage us to define Chinese as a language of many dialects while referring to French, Italian, and Spanish as separate languages, even though the degree of distance between the Romance "languages" and the Chinese "dialects" is roughly comparable (2005[1980]: 217). Millar, summarizes the inherently sociopolitical nature of linguistic classification nicely when he writes that there are

"many languages [that] could have been perceived as dialects of a larger language if the historical development of particular societies had been different; by the same token, there are a number of language varieties considered dialects, which, if the history of the territories involved had been even slightly different, might now be perceived as languages" (2005:57).

Thus, my goal in addressing the debate over whether the ex-Soviet Turkic languages constituted distinct languages or "mere" dialects, and if dialects, then dialects "of what," is not to weigh in on the question, though I was often pressured to make a pronouncement by ideologues on both sides of the debate, but rather to explore the ways in which overt declarations regarding status by such ideologues, as well as more "innocent," or at least less intentionally politically charged, discursive use of terms that nonetheless suggest implicit ideological presuppositions concerning language status, and hence social hierarchy, were employed and interpreted in relations within the post-Cold War Turkic world. The terminology in question includes such general terms as "*dil*" (language), "*lehçe*" (dialect), "*ağız*" (vernacular or tongue), and "*şive*" (patois or accent)[52] as well as the more specific terms "*Türk dili*" (Turkish language), "*Türk dilleri*"

[52] Within Turkey, the term *lehçe* (dialect) has generally been used to refer to Turkish dialects--e.g., *İstanbul lehçesi* (the Istanbul dialect). A dialect deemed less distinct, or accorded less status, was generally referred to as a *şive* (accent, patois). The term *ağız*, also the Turkish word for "mouth," carries the connotation of a purely spoken language much like the term "tongue" does in English. Interestingly, the Turkish word *dil*, meaning a language that is both written and spoken, is also the word for the actual physical organ.

(Turkic languages),[53] "*Türk lehçeleri*" (Turkish/ Turkic dialects), "*Türkçe*" (Turkish), and "*Türkçeleri*" (Turkishes).[54]

As noted in chapter two, not only did the Soviet nationalities policies endeavor to create separate languages within the Turkic republics by choosing dialects that were maximally distant from one another as the foundation for new republican languages, but,

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[53] In Turkish and the Turkic languages, the term *Türk* in its adjectival form has both the narrow meaning of "Turkish," referring to that which is associated with the Republic of Turkey or its people, and the broader meaning of "Turkic," referring to that which is associated with the Turkic peoples. Thus, term *Türk dili* can be translated either as "Turkish language," meaning the specific language spoken in Turkey, or "Turkic language," meaning the family of languages spoken by the Turkic peoples, or the proto-language form which their various languages as descended. It should be noted that the dual meaning of the term not only leads to analytical confusion, but pragmatic difficulties, for by its very indeterminacy, any meaning can be laid on the term, with the result that it has become an important nexus of negotiation over issues of language and identity politics in the post-Cold War era Turkic worlds. I have chosen here to translate the term *Türk dili* as "Turkish language" for two reasons--first, in acknowledgement of the fact that many Turks, and some among the Turkic peoples, believe the term "Turkic" to be a foreign concept designed to divide the Turkic peoples who think of themselves as one people and hence make no linguistic distinction between them (as will be addressed later in this chapter), and second, because even when intended in its broader sense, the narrower sense seems to be either subconsciously implied (on the part of Turks) or consciously interpreted (on the part of the Turkic peoples). Although the term *Türk dilleri* can also be translated either as "Turkish languages" or "Turkic languages," I have chosen here to contrast it to *Türk dili* by translating it as "Turkic languages," since *Türk dilleri* was the term suggested by the Turkic peoples themselves as an acceptable alternative to *Türk dili* which they generally objected to because of its implicit association with the Turkish language [*Türkçe*]. By contrast, many Turks resisted using the term *Türk dilleri* because this plural form suggested that the Turkic languages might be separate languages as opposed to branches, or "dialects" of the same proto-language. It is my contention that the controversy over *Türk dili* versus *Türk dilleri* lies at the heart of the negotiation over *Einbau* and *Ausbau* thinking in the post-Cold War Turkic world, and I have thus chosen to highlight this distinction by translating the terms differently.

[54] *Türkçe* (Turkish) is enshrined the Turkish Constitution as the name of the Turkish language, the official language of Turkey. It is thus synonymous with the narrower meaning of the term *Türk dili*.

in support of these policies, the Turkic peoples were also then conditioned to think of their respective languages as distinct from one another, and, more importantly, to think of them *as languages*, for to countenance the view that they were "dialects" would have encouraged the notion that the Turkic peoples, like their languages, were related. Given the pan-Turkic implications of such a proposition, Moscow chose to avoid fostering any such supranationalist inclinations by granting the republican languages equivalent legal status with Russian as official languages of the individual Turkic republics.[55] Thus, where there had been some shift in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries away from linguistic loyalty to local dialects toward allegiance to a broader common Turkic language through the publication of Ismail Gaspirali's *Tercüman* and the adoption of a common Turkic alphabet, in subsequent decades, the linguistic culture of the Turkic peoples developed in such a way as to privilege, and encourage loyalty to, the discrete languages of the titular republics.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the initiation of Turkic world relations, the seemingly settled issue of the linguistic status of the Turkic languages was, however, resurrected by the widespread, often unreflexive, Turkish presumption that the ex-Soviet Turkic languages constituted dialects rather than languages. This notion existed at both the overt and covert level, was both declared and implied in the discourse of Turks, and was generally intended as an expression of a "cooperative" *Einbau* spirit in the sense that it depicted all Turkic peoples as sharing in a great Turkish language spoken across a vast

[55] The only exception was the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic which had no officially designated republican language.

territory stretching from the Aegean to the Great Wall of China. Thus, as noted in the previous chapter, implicit inclusion of the mother tongues of the Turkic peoples under the umbrella of *Türkçe* (Turkish) or the *Türk dili* (Turkish language) abounded in the discourse of noted scholars, politicians and government bureaucrats in the opening remarks delivered at the outset of each of the early linguistic congresses. That said, because both terms, even as they purported to represent the Turkic languages collectively, were also strongly identified with the official language of the Turkish Republic, references to a single *Türkçe* or *Türk dili* spoken by many millions within a dispersed *ethnie* implicitly created the impression among the Turkic peoples that their mother tongues were derivative from, or "dialects" of the Turkish language.

More explicit reference was also made to the derivative status of the Turkic languages through widespread reference to the "dialects" or "vernaculars" (*lehçeler*) spoken within the ex-Soviet sphere and use of the term "Turkish dialects" (*Türk lehçeleri*) as opposed to "Turkic languages" (*Türk dilleri*). For example, in a speech delivered during the opening ceremonies of the PTLC, head of the Publications Department of the National Library, Ayla Kutlu, not only referred alternately to Turkish (*Türkçe*) and the Turkish language (*Türk dili*) as the language spoken by the Turkic peoples writ large, but also spoke of the "various dialects of the Turkish language" (*"Türk dilinin çeşitli lehçeleri"*) in noting need to focus on the common difficulties they faced and made mention of the "Turkish language and its dialects" (*"Türk dili ve lehçeleri"*) in opining that "[t]hose who discuss the Turkish language and its dialects, who remove their differences, and who propose a solution [for uniting them] will not be

forgotten" *("Türk dili ve lehçelerini tartışanlar, ayrılıkları kaldıranlar, cözüm önerenler unutulmayacaklardır"*).

Popular Assessments of and Attitudes toward the Turkic Tongues

Among the general populace, use of the term *lehçe* to refer to the Turkic languages was near universal. In pointing to its widespread use, it is, however, important to note that for most Turks, especially non-specialists, *lehçe* was simply the hegemonic term for referring to the native tongues of their Turkic brethren. The term *Türk lehçeleri* had its origins in research conducted on the Turkic dialects prior to and during the Cold War, often by those with pan-Turkist sympathies, and had been adopted quickly following the collapse of the Soviet Union, when the dearth of terms for referring to the soon-to-be ex-Soviet peoples became patently obvious, and the need for such terms was immediate. *Türk lehçeleri* thus entered the public lexicon and was, generally speaking, employed unreflexively as an uninflected referential term.

That is not to say that the terms were, in fact, neutral or uninflected, for words, as Bakhtin (1981) notes, are always dialogic, carrying traces of past lives into the new contexts of their use. In this sense, the widespread adoption of a term that had long referenced the nonstandard, low variant, purely oral dialects within the Turkish Republic to the fully-fledged literary languages of the Turkic peoples could not but have created an unconscious perception within the Turkish public at large that the Turkic languages, like regional dialects of Turkey, were of lower status than modern standard Turkish.

Moreover, the term *lehçe*, which carried a similar connotation of regional dialect in the Turkic languages and was often used to refer to regional dialects within their own republics, was not perceived as semantically neutral by the Turkic peoples, many of whom were wont to ask rhetorically and quite pointedly, when the issue was raised, whether it was linguistically possible to have a dialect of a dialect.

The impression that the Turkic languages were somehow akin to the linguistic "regional color" of the Turkic world both informed explicit language attitudes toward the Turkic languages and was reinforced by them. In speaking to Turkish laypersons about issues of language in the Turkic world, I found the frequent tendency to romanticize and essentialize the Turkic languages with descriptions ranging from "simple" (*sade*) "sweet" (*tatlı*) "unaffected" (*samimi*) and "pure" (*saf*) to "true" (*öz*), "natural" (*tabii*), "fresh" (*taze*), and even "child-like" (*çocuk gibi*) abounding. Such assessments were generally based on very little, if any, actual contact with the Turkic peoples or exposure to their languages. Instead, they were derived from a deep sense of kinship with the Turkic peoples and affinity for their languages which had been fostered through the Ministry of Education's official primary school curriculum and was further reinforced by media reportage, brief encounters, hearsay during the first "euphoric" stage of Turkic world relations.

One of the more expansive descriptions related by a Turkish writer friend of mine recounting an early encounter with a scholar from Kyrgyzstan during a symposium in Turkey, remains with me. She recalled: "When she opened her mouth, it was as if I had travelled back in time. It was like an earlier 'proto' Turkish--simple, harmonious, and

sweet, so sweet. Sweet like a child's Turkish. I was enthralled." She continued: "She seemed embarrassed, covering her mouth and giggling bashfully, but I kept encouraging her, telling her how it thrilled me to hear her speak. I spent all night talking with her, getting her to say this and that. I just couldn't seem to let her go, poor thing, and she was too well-mannered to excuse herself." The Turkic peoples were generally aware of, and often even subject to, such depictions of their languages and found it disconcerting to have their languages simultaneously romanticized and infantilized by ill-informed, if well-intentioned, Turks. "At first it's interesting to catalogue the differences between the languages. You say this, and we say that--how interesting. But after a while, you grow tired of the interest Turks show in the way you speak," an Azerbaijani graduate student enrolled in a Turkish university confided to me one day. "The Turks have all these romanticized notions about the Central Asian Turks and their languages they learned in school, and they have trouble separating myth from reality. They treat you like a curiosity, or a child. They can't seem to see you as a person."

To make matter worse, the uninflected meaning of *lehçe* when used in reference to the Turkic languages was not universally agreed upon, and I was not infrequently told, sometimes quite emphatically, that while Turkish was a language, the Turkic "languages" could only be defined as dialects. Upon my posing the question "language or dialect" to a Turkish writer with whom I was speaking one day, he replied: "They are, of course, dialects. What separates a language from a dialect is the level of refinement of the language and the settings in which it is used. One does not use Turkey's regional dialects on television, in educational establishments, or in carrying out bureaucratic business.

They are not appropriate in those settings and are inadequate to such tasks. These dialects are used primarily in the home. Similarly, in the Turkic republics, the local Turkic dialects were not used in official settings. Russian served this purpose and before Russian, Persian. The local dialects were used at home; they were 'kitchen languages' (*mutfak dilleri*). As result they never developed the ability to serve in an official function, the way Turkish has. This is why we find so many Russian words in the Turkic dialects. A language must be able to serve in all settings and fulfill all functions for its speakers, otherwise it is a dialect."

This not uncommon assessment of the Turkic languages as dialects in the sense of "kitchen languages" was troubling to the Turkic peoples, who countered that no language employed as the language of instruction in university-level studies, as many of the Turkic languages were, could be considered a "kitchen language." Over breakfast one morning at one of the many Turkic world congresses I attended, I listened as a Turkish journalist attempted to explain in a neutral and impartial manner, using pseudo-scientific terms to refer to the existence of different language domains, why he considered the mother tongues of the Turkic peoples to be dialects instead of languages, as the Azerbaijani scholar with whom he was speaking became increasingly agitated. Finally unable to stay silent any longer, the Azerbaijani broke in to counter that, in fact, the opposite was true.

While it was true that the Azerbaijani language had suffered second-class status under the Soviet regime, his native tongue had greater claim to language status than Turkish, he argued, emphasizing that literature in the Azerbaijani language stretched back to the 15th and 16th centuries under such renowned authors as Nasimi and Fizuli, while

the Turkish language had remained the province of illiterate villagers and so-called Turkish literature was written in the Ottoman language until centuries later. The Azerbaijani scholar then added, nodding at me, that when touting Turkish and the Turkic world to outsiders, Turks had a penchant for claiming such works as the *Dede Korkut*[56] as evidence of the grand history of the Turkish language, yet they seemed to "forget" such contributions when assessing the Turkic languages as dialects. This was not the first time I had heard reference to Azerbaijan's august literary figures offered as tangible proof that the Azerbaijani language was a fully fledged language of literature rather than a spoken "dialect," for such retorts and rebuttals tended to circulate throughout the community in waves, but the dismissive comparison to contemporaneous Turkish as a "dialect" was both novel and ironically apropos, serving to turn the table on Turks who would dismiss the Turkic languages as dialects by emphasizing the rather short history of the Turkish literary tradition in contrast to the long and venerated, history of "classical" Azerbaijani literature.

Used in the sense of "kitchen language," the term *lehçe* was thus more in keeping with language attitudes commonly-held among Turks with more direct experience of the Turkic languages that described them as "rude" (*kaba*), "uncultured/impolite" (*terbiyesiz*), "uncouth/ without refinement" (*inceliksiz*), "uncivilized" (*medeniyetsiz*), and "simplistic" (*basıt*). Such assessments were so commonplace as to be almost

[56] *Dede Korkut* is a compilation of epic stories (*destan*) that tells of the heroic adventures and struggles for freedom of the nomadic Oghuz Turks in and around Azerbaijan, Iran, and Anatolia. The oral epic stories, which describe the history, traditions, and mores of the Oghuz Turks were written down around the 14th century in the Azerbaijani language (for more information, see Lewis 1974, Meeker 1992).

unremarkable, although one instance does remain firmly ensconced in my memory. One evening at a popular bar in Baku, I was introduced by an Azerbaijani friend to a young Turkish diplomat who had arrived in Azerbaijan several months earlier. We shouted some pleasantries at one another in Turkish over the din, until she motioned for me to follow her out to the deck for a "civilized conversation." After several minutes exchanging background information and our respective reasons for being in Baku, she complimented my Turkish, commenting on how pleasant it was to speak with someone "who actually knew the language." "The way these Azerbaijanis speak is just so rude," she confided by way of explanation, "I just can't get over it. It's like the worst village Turkish, completely uneducated. If the country's so-called elite speaks so crudely, I can't imagine what it must be like in the regions."

Astonished that an official representative of the Turkey's Azerbaijan mission had been so unabashedly contemptuous in her characterization of her host country's language and people, I quickly glanced around to make sure that no Azerbaijanis within earshot had heard what she'd said and taken offense. Noting my embarrassment and concern, she remarked dismissively: "Don't worry. They wouldn't have understood anyway." Given that attitudes toward language are always entwined with perceptions of its speakers and their society, the Turkish diplomat went on the remark, in a compendium of complaints too long to be justified by her short time in the country, that it was difficult to take Azerbaijan seriously, because the education, infrastructure, institutions, goods and services, food, and everything else was so substandard in comparison to Turkey, and so "very Russified." "It is said that they are Turks, but their culture is nothing like ours…

they don't even have their own culture, it's all just Russian culture" she noted dismissively.

Although troubled by her lack of discretion, her words in no way surprised me. By that time, I had frequently heard similar assessments--solicited and unsolicited, overt and covert, condescending and matter-of-fact--of the Turkic languages, which often cast them as "bad" Turkish in much the same way that African American Vernacular English (AAVE) has long been disparaged as "bad" English (e.g., Labov 1982a, Lanehart 1999). This was particularly true of Azerbaijani, which, by virtue of being linguistically more proximate to Turkish, and certainly its regional dialects, than the Central Asian languages, was more easily assessed as "bad" Turkish, for the closer the languages in linguistic terms, the stronger the illusion, or subconscious ideological presumption, that they are the same and thus the greater the tendency to reject the related language as an inferior version of "self" than to see it as a separate but equal "other".

The realization of how easy it was for the Turkic languages in general, and Azerbaijani in particular, to be dismissed as "bad" Turkish (*kaba Türkçe*) was driven home to me in a discussion concerning the differences between the Turkish and Azerbaijani languages one evening with a Turkish scholar who had spent his formative years in Turkey before moving to the United States, completing his doctorate, and returning to the region as a professor. He was living in Baku when I was conducting research and asked me one evening how my study of the Azerbaijani language was going. I replied that it was going well, but that because Azerbaijani was so close to Turkish, I found myself frequently battling interference from my Turkish. He laughed knowingly

and then confided that he had an even more entrenched difficulty. Having grown up in Turkey, he had internalized his grandmother's directives on how to speak "properly" and her constant admonitions for him to do so. Coming from this perspective, he said, hearing an Azerbaijani, for example, ask for a *hıyar*, or "cucumber," instead of a *salatalık* at the market made him recoil.[57]

Similarly, the Azerbaijani use of *sağ ol* for "thanks" and "*yok*" for "no," instead of *teşekkür ederim* and *hayır*, grated at his nerves.[58] He explained that the use of such expressions so violated his sense of propriety that he couldn't help but think of the Azerbaijani language as crude and the people themselves as uncouth and uncultured, even as, in more rational moments, he knew this assessment to be untrue. Because his overseas studies had made him self-reflexive about such culture-borne prejudices, he was able to consciously make sense of his visceral subconscious reaction, but even so, he said, he had to continually remind himself that his response was simply an enculturated prejudice and that it had no actual relationship to the linguistic sophistication of the language or the manners, educational-level, or intelligence of the people who spoke

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[57] *Hıyar* is an Arabic-derived word for "cucumber" which has been replaced by the English-derived term *salatalık*, literally "that which goes in a salad." In modern Turkish, *salatalık* is preferred largely because of its origin in Western rather than Eastern languages, but *hıyar* also has a secondary crude slang meaning.

[58] Both "*sağ ol*" and "*yok*" exist in Turkish, but are less formal and certainly less polite than their respective equivalents "*teşekkür ederim*" and "*hayır*." In Turkish, the term *sağ ol*, meaning "thanks" is generally considered less formal and more "villagey" than *teşekkürler* ("thanks"), which is the less formal form of *teşekkür ederim*. These days, however, many educated, western-leaning Turks prefer the French loanword *merci*. The politics of lexical choices such as this, and their role in Turkish identity politics, will be discussed at greater length in chapter five.

differently than he, as a native speaker of a closely related language, felt that they should. Nonetheless, whether romanticized as the "regional color" of the Turkic world, dismissed as "kitchen languages," or disparaged as the uneducated patois of a country bumpkin, hegemonic assumptions or unreflexive assessments of the Turkic languages as "dialects," as compared to the Turkish "language," inevitably contributed to the widespread belief among the Turkic peoples that the Turks perceived their own language to be "superior."

"Expert" Assessments of the Turkic Tongues

As might be expected, most Turkish linguists and language professionals with whom I spoke of the language/dialect question had a greater knowledge of, and hence, respect for the Turkic languages and thus a more specialized understanding of the term *lehçe*, albeit one that justified, rather than precluded, its usage to refer to the native tongues of the Turkic peoples, and it is largely their understanding of the term that informed the approach of Turkish members of the Turkic world community of practice took toward the Turkic languages. By *lehçe*, most Turkish linguists claimed to mean distinct variants belonging not only to the same language family or descended from the same proto-language, but belonging to the same branch of related languages in much the way that Italian, Spanish and French--all descended from, and might thus be understood to be "dialects" of Latin--belong to the Romance languages branch of the Indo-European language family. By this definition, the native tongues of all Turkic peoples, including the Turkish spoken in Turkey, were understood to be related "dialects" all belonging to

the Turkic branch of the Altaic language family. Thus, advocates of this perspective insisted, use of the term *lehçe* was not intended to disparage or belittle the Turkic languages as "dialects" and certainly not to contrast them to the Turkish language, indeed, just the opposite. It was meant to demonstrate the natural affinity among the languages, and hence the speakers of these languages, by emphasizing their shared ancestry. Used in this sense, it is evident that the intent behind classifying the Turkic languages as dialects was in keeping with "cooperative" *Einbau* efforts to promote linguistic rapprochement within the Turkic world, and hence consonant with the ideological preconceptions of Turkish organizers of the early linguistic congresses.

The problem with this perspective for their Turkic counterparts, many of whom had been enthusiastic participants in the early linguistic congresses and subscribed to the linguistic classificatory scheme that held the Turkic languages had all descended from an ancient Turkic proto-language appeared to be practical rather than theoretical. In particular, it seemed to revolve around the fact that the Turkish spoken in Turkey was rarely, if ever, overtly referred to as a dialect by its native speakers, even among those who considered Turkish and the ex-Soviet Turkic languages to all comprise dialects of a Turkic proto-language. Turkish was thus implicitly excluded from the term *Türk lehçeleri*, and if collective reference was made to the Turkic languages as a whole, when, for example, referring to efforts to create an *ortak alfabe*, the phrase *"Türkçe ve Türk lehçeleri"* ("Turkish and the Turkic dialects") was generally employed.[59] Thus, the

[59] This parallels use of "*Türkiye ve Türk cumhuriyetleri*" (Turkey and the Turkic republics) to refer collectively to the constituent countries of the Turkic world.

"cooperative" *Einbau* intent of even those Turks who, in using the term *lehçe* to refer to the Turkic "dialects," meant thereby to suggest a primordial unity among the Turkic peoples was belied by the cognitive dissonance inherent in the subconscious "exceptional" status accorded Turkish. This, in turn, was interpreted by the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples as an indication that the Turks privileged their own "dialect" and regarded it as "superior." In this sense, the objection among the Turkic peoples to having their languages referred to as dialects had to do not only with the "lesser" linguistic classification--after all the Romance languages were not explicitly referred to as "dialects" of Latin but as languages in their own right--but also with the implicit comparison to Turkish and the attendant hegemonic presumption among Turks that the Turkish spoken in Turkey, whether dialect or language, was somehow "superior" to the Turkic languages.

The degree to which the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples were troubled by the subconscious exceptionalism accorded Turkish is clear from an interaction I observed between an older Turkish Turcologist lecturing on issues of language and orthography within the Turkic world during a symposium on the cultural basis for commonality among the Turkic peoples and an Azerbaijani scholar in the audience. During the question and answer period after the lecture, the Azerbaijani scholar stood up to ask why "the professor" had made continual reference to *"Türk lehçeleri ve Türkçe"* (reversing the usual order of the phrase as if to suggest that the exceptionalism of Turkish equated to a secondary rather than primary status in relation to the broader group). "If, as you argue, the Turkic languages are all *dialects* of the same Turkic proto-language," he asked, "why

then refer separately to Turkish [*Türkçe*]." "Young man," the professor replied, "If you paid attention to the content of my speech, you would know that I consider all Turkishes [*Türkçeleri*] to be dialects of proto-Turkish." "But why then do you say '<u>and</u> Turkish' [*<u>ve</u> Türkçe*]?" the Azerbaijani scholar persisted. "Because, dear sir, Turkish [*Türkçe*] has been the name of the language of the Republic of Turkey for over seventy years now."

From his answer, it is clear that the inherent contradiction in declaring all "Turkishes" to be dialects of equal standing yet separating Anatolian Turkish when speaking of them collectively simply did not compute for the professor, nor did it for most Turks. It was, however, an issue of great import to the Turkic peoples for it seemed to suggest an implicit, or covert, belief in the superiority of Turkish and, hence, in Turkey's "natural" leadership role within the Turkic world. During a break between lectures, I asked an Azerbaijani acquaintance whom I had seen in the audience what he thought about the exchange. "It was actually quite typical," he responded. "Theoretically the professor may consider all the Turkic languages to be dialects of proto-Turkish, but at a gut level, he still thinks of Turkish as separate and superior. He's not even aware of it, it's subconscious." Relating the story several days later to a Kazakh colleague, I found him to be less generous in his assessment. "The Turks know what they are supposed to say," he replied, "they just don't actually believe it, and that comes out in how they say it. They think that by simply declaring Turkish to be a dialect along with the Turkic language, it will appease our "sensitivities," but then why not just call them all languages?"

The answer as to why those Turks actively engaged in efforts to promote linguistic rapprochement among the Turkic peoples persisted in calling the native tongues of the Turkic peoples "dialects" rather than "languages" and preferred to ostensibly include the Turkish language in a list of Turkic dialects rather than grant the Turkic "dialects" equal status as languages, lies, I believe, in local ideological presuppositions about the nature of the putative Turkic world and the ultimate objectives of those insisting on such terms in seeing it actualized. Within the context of Turkic world relations, granting the Turkic "dialects" status as languages would have implied the Turkic peoples' autonomy and independence, their ability to "go it alone" in the post-Cold War era at a time when most Turks actively involved in issues pertaining to the Turkic world, and certainly the Turkish government, still cherished the hope that the Turkic peoples would choose the Turkish "model" and hence tie their futures to the Turkish republic.

In this sense, while was depicted as a "scientific" means of emphasizing the inherent similarities among the Turkic peoples and promoting a unified sensibility among them, and hence consonant with "cooperative" *Einbau* intent, Turkish insistence on the term *lehçe* rather than *dil* simultaneously suggested an ideological interest in shaping Turkic world relations in such as way as betrayed a certain "cooptive" *Einbau* intent. By contrast, the Turkic peoples' resistance to the Turkish characterization of their native tongues as dialects, even when Anatolian Turkish was itself depicted as such, suggested an emerging perception of a covert "cooptive" intent lurking behind the ostensibly "cooperative" *Einbau* project of uniting the Turkic peoples linguistically and a

developing *Ausbau* sentiment based not only on a rejection of the implication that their languages were somehow "inferior" to Turkish, but also a burgeoning sense of their own linguistic distinctiveness and recognition that the absence of a distinct language called into question their respective claims to independent nationhood (Blommaert and Vershuren 1998).

Despite the increasing *Einbau-Ausbau* tenor to Turkic world relations, there were occasional attempts to reach across the widening divide to understand the "other" side, negotiate misunderstandings which were hindering rapprochement among the Turkic peoples, and hence restore a sense of "cooperative" *Einbau*. In a speech entitled "The Turkish Language in the World: A Sociopolitical Approach" delivered at the Turkish Language Society, Timur Kocaoğlu, a Turkish professor of linguistics of Uzbek ancestry and especially astute observer of the role of language politics in the ongoing debate over linguistic rapprochement in the Turkic world, sought to do just that. Arguing that a simple misalignment of understandings among Turks and the Turkic peoples of the use of the term *lehçe* to refer to the Turkic languages was the cause of much consternation for which Turks and the Turkic peoples shared mutual blame, he noted:

> [As a result], from time to time friendly disputes and misunderstandings emerge between Turkish [*Türkiyeli*][60] linguists and linguists trained in the former Soviet system. Linguist representatives of the Turkic peoples in the former USSR

[60] Kocaoğlu's use of the newly-coined "national" term *Türkiyeli* (literally "one from Turkey") instead the usual ethnic moniker *Türk* was meant as conciliatory to the Turkic peoples, many of whom resented that Turkey had "usurped" the broader ethnic term for use in the narrow national sense.

> sometimes in a slightly touchy manner give voice to their concerns, saying: 'You belittle our language by reducing it to a dialect [*lehçe*] (in other words a vernacular [*ağız*]).' Of course, here the blame lies somewhat with them and also mutually somewhat with us. We in Turkey, boldly using only the term "language" ["*dil*"] for our own spoken and written language, introduce Turkey's Turkish as the Turkish language abroad. However, should an Azeri, an Uzbek, or a Tatar apply the terms "Azeri language" [*"Azeri dili"*], "Uzbek language" [*"Özbek dili"*] or "Tatar language" [*"Tatar dili"*] to their own mother tongue [*ana dili*], we jump in hastily, insisting: "No, this is incorrect. There is no Azeri language; Azeri is a Turkish dialect." This, however, like it or not, promotes the impression among the Turkish tribes [*Türk boyları*] outside of Turkey that we consider ourselves "superior" [*üstünlük*]. It's as if ours is the "Turkish language" [*Türk dili*] and theirs are "respective dialects of ours" [*"bizim birer lehçemiz"*]![61]

As Kocaoğlu adroitly points out, in the final analysis, for both "sides" to the debate, the issue of linguistic classification was based less on objective data and more on subjective sensibility and ideological orientation. In this sense, I am reminded of a discussion I had with an Azerbaijani writer on the essential nature of the Azerbaijani language and its relation to the other Turkic languages. Waxing philosophical, he queried, "Where does the distinction between language and dialect rest? This linguist can offer this or that linguistic criteria to convince us that Azerbaijani is a dialect, not a language, but that linguist, offering different linguistic criteria and supporting examples that sometimes seem indistinguishable from those offered by the first, will convince us that Azerbaijani is a language, not a dialect." He went on to note: "For me, Azerbaijani is a language because it allows me to express things I am unable to express in Russian, a recognized language of world literature. In this sense, it serves not simply a communicative, but also an expressive function. Nevertheless, in the end, the distinction

[61] The text of this speech was also put online and can be found at http://www.turkiye.net/sota/tdaskon.html, last accessed August 2, 2011. The translation is mine.

between language and dialect can't be found in science or literature, it is found in our hearts." To this poetic assessment, I would add, that the distinction also lay in the ideological presumptions and sociopolitical considerations of the day and bespoke divergent visions of the imagined Turkic world community under whose rubric the Turkic peoples were to unite.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

From the Turkic peoples' perspective, the covert "cooptive" nature of *Einbau* efforts to promote rapprochement within the Turkic world that was manifest in the politics of linguistic classification was also evident in other ways. Returning now to the professor's answer that *Türkçe* had a seventy-year history as the name of the official language of the Republic of Turkey to the young Azerbaijani scholar's query as to why he persisted in using the phrase "and Turkish" described above, I would note that the debate over whether the mother tongues of the Turkic peoples ought to be classified as dialects or languages was also reflected in the debate over the proper name to be given them both individually and collectively. In the professor's unreflexive response, the power inherent to naming is suggested, wherein the bestowal of a name grants materiality, moral weight, and status to the person or thing thus named. Although generally conceived to be the essence of linguistic arbitrariness, proper names are imbued with indexical relations to other people, places, and events, as well as to the history and location of their emergence and thus constitute succinct narratives that bespeak the past,

present, and future (e.g., Basso 1984, Rymes 1996). As such, they act as powerful symbolic resources. In this sense, the Turkish language, as a named variant, is accorded status that recalls the Turkish struggle for independence, the birth of the Turkish nation, and the creation of a unified language, and hence embodies the "national" characteristics that Turks most pride themselves on--courage, independence, and self-sufficiency.

While the Turkic languages were also inheritors of distinct language names as befit their official status within the respective Soviet Socialist Republics, such names had been bestowed under a colonial system and thus, in the minds of most Turks, bespoke the deliberate attempt to eradicate pan-Turkic sentiment by atomizing the Turkic peoples and, hence, the domination and subjugation of the Turkic peoples under the Soviet regime. In this sense, the names given the native tongues of the Turkic peoples were not only the very antithesis of the national characteristics upon which the Turks prided themselves, but also the total repudiation of pan-Turkic sentiment, revival of which was the foundation upon which contemporary visions of Turkic world unity rested. For the Turkic peoples, however, the inherited names for their respective languages were invested with positive associations that generally outweighed any negative associations with Soviet hegemony.

Regardless of explicitly ideological Soviet involvement in their standardization, the mother tongues of the Turkic peoples had become fully-fledged national languages under the Soviet Union, turning a smattering of related dialects into appropriately unifying symbols of the respective Turkic republics, and distinct national identities and linguistic cultures had grown up around them, in much the same way that the Turkish

language reform had unified and standardized Turkish dialects in aid of creating and consolidating the Turkish nation. Thus, while eager to forge an independent national identity in the post-Soviet era, the Turkic peoples were no more ready to shed their languages' names than they were to abandon the languages themselves solely on the basis of their having been standardized and granted official status during the Soviet era. It should, however, be noted that their willingness to alter the alphabets imposed by the Soviets suggests that the lack of good alternatives for renaming their languages may also have been a factor in their collective decision to retain the names bestowed under Soviet rule, as suggested in the following description by an Azerbaijani linguist of the process involved in choosing a name for the Azerbaijani language:

> There really was no other choice than *Azerbaycan dili*. We are Turks and our language is Turkish. By all rights, our language should be called Turkish language [*Türk dili*], as President Elçibey initially wanted, but Atatürk took the name Turk [*Türk*] and Turkish [*Türkçe*] when he founded the Turkish Republic [*Türkiye Cumhuriyeti*]. The Turks weren't pleased with *Türk dili* because they thought it should be a general name for all the Turkic languages. They recommended Azerbaijani Turkish [*Azerbaycan Türkçesi*] in its place, but that gives the impression that our language is a dialect of Turkish. If the Turks were to call their language Turkey Turkish [*Türkiye Türkçesi*] or, better yet, Anatolian Turkish [*Anadolu Türkçesi*], then it might be acceptable, but the Turks have called their language *Türkçe* for many decades and they're attached to this name. Now they criticize us, asking why we would want to keep a name given us by the Russians, but they don't understand that we've used that name for years. *Azerbaycan dili* is part of our heritage just as *Türkçe* is part of theirs.

Not only were the language names inherited from the Soviet era part of their "national" heritage, but they furthermore seemed best suited to the Turkic peoples'

interests in establishing an independent national identity in the post-Soviet era. Although a seemingly counterintuitive proposition that symbols established under colonial rule could be repurposed in aid of the national identity-making projects of the newly independent Turkic republics, this is not an uncommon phenomena, and for the Turkic peoples, the continuing appropriateness of the languages names inherited from the Soviet era to the nascent national endeavor was fully in keeping with the explicitly "nationalist" purpose they served in creating distinctive Turkic republics under the Soviet system (c.f., chapter two). In essence, the nationalities policy of the Soviet state had created languages where there had been only dialects and nations where there had been only tribes which, within a global order in which the "one language/one nation" proposition reigns supreme, thus served as the very basis for international recognition of the Turkic republics as independent nations.

Thus, within relatively short order the Turkic peoples had each settled on retaining the language names inherited from the Soviet state, and *Azerbaycan dili, Kazak dili*, *Kırgız dili*, *Özbek dili*, and *Türkmen dili*[62] were duly designated the official languages of the newly independent Turkic republics. In terms of the implications for the language-dialect debate and, thus, broader Turkic world relations, the important point to note about these language names is that they plainly reinforce the status of the native tongues of the Turkic peoples as languages through inclusion of the word *dil*. In this sense, then, the chosen language names serve essentially the same purpose of suppressing

[62] This is the Turkish for the language names of the Turkic peoples. In their native languages, they were: *Azərbaycan dili*, *O'zbek tili*, *Qazaq tili*, *Kyrgyz tili*, and *Türkmen dili*.

a broader pan-Turkic sentiment they did during the Soviet era, even if the Turkic peoples are now in the role of sender rather than receiver of the implied message.

The issue of language names was, however, far from settled within the broader context of Turkic world relations, as many Turks, apparently blindered by their own ideological drive to unify the putative Turkic world, either questioned the "linguistic" validity of such names, claiming they were not, in fact, languages, as Kocaoğlu noted, or simply chose to use other names. In this sense, the names *Azerbaycan Türkçesi*, *Kırgız Türkçesi*, *Özbek Türkçesi*, etc. were, and still are, favored by the Turkish Language Society and Ministry of Culture, which, along with the Ministry of Education, Winrow describes as being "attracted to what may be identified as cultural Pan-Turkism" (1998:108-9). Such usage is evident in the title of a two volume *Comparative Dictionary of Turkish Dialects* (*Karşılaştırmalı Türk Lehçeleri Sözlüğü*), published in 1992 by the Ministry of Culture and compiled by a commission headed up by the director of the Turkish Language Society from 1993-2000, which compared vocabulary from the Turkish, Azerbaijani, Bashkurd, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Tatar, Turkmen, and Uighur "Turkishes" (*Türkçeleri*). A more contemporary searchable version of the same dictionary which allows the user to "choose a dialect" ("*lehçeyi seçiniz*") has recently been made available online through a joint endeavor between the Turkish Language Society, the Turkish-founded Ahmet Yesevi University in Kazakhstan, and the Turkish Culture and Tourism Ministry.[63]

[63] The webpage can be viewed at http://www.tdk.gov.tr/lehceler/, last accessed August 2, 2011. It is interesting to note that while the other "Turkishes" are listed in alphabetic

The appeal of this naming convention for those Turks who adopted it was that by creating a compound noun that included "Turkish" (*Türkçe*), it indicated the broader ethnolinguistic affiliation of the speakers of the languages thus named, thereby highlighting the fundamental basis for supranational affiliation among the Turkic peoples. In this sense, it was the ideological equivalent of declaring the Turkic languages all dialects (*lehçeler*) of proto-Turkish, as indeed the title of the comparative dictionary suggests. By contrast, such names were problematic for most of the Turkic peoples because they accorded their languages a lesser status, seeming to suggest that the Turkic languages were simply derivative from, or variants of the Turkish spoken in Turkey, much like the Ankara dialect of standard Turkish might be referred to as *Ankara Türkçesi*. Thus, although there was no disagreement over the fact that the native tongues of the Turkic peoples belonged to the Turkic language family, the term *Türkçe* had become too closely associated with the named variant of Turkish spoken in Turkey to be applied generically across the Turkic languages, even when modified by the narrower "national" identity.

Among the general Turkish populace, language names ending in *–ce/ca/çe/ça* were preferred, particularly the shorter *Azerice*-type forms, largely because of the economy of effort they represented, but also because they conformed to Turkish morphological rules (ethnic name + suffix) for designating languages, as in *Ingilizce* (English), *Francızca* (French), and *Çince* (Chinese). While this form was thus more

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order, Turkey's Turkish tops the list and appears as the default, again suggesting the enduring sense among Turks in the "superiority" of their language or its "rightful" status as a language of wider communication among the Turkic peoples.

acceptable to some of the Turkic peoples, and indeed the Uzbeks and the Turkmen identified *Özbekçe* and *Türkmence* as suitable alternates to *Özbekçe dili* and *Türkmence dili*, others nonetheless felt that the *–ce/ca/çe/ça* recalled the *–çe* ending in *lehçe*, thereby implying that the Turkic languages were no more than dialects. Although this opinion was expressed to me directly by Turkic friends, colleagues, and professional contacts, as with many other such issues having to do with language, orthography, and identity politics in the Turkic world, it was also increasingly represented by Turkish members of the community of practice engaged in promoting Turkic world relations who, in attempting to correct "what went wrong," gradually adopted a perspective on Turkic world relations informed by discussions with Turkic friends and colleagues. Thus, as a means of demonstrating the ways in which insights gleaned from informal bilateral discussions over linguistic rapprochement and identity politics were recycled in wider negotiations over the linguistic and sociocultural dimensions of the Turkic world as part of a broader effort to correct course on the basis of lessons learned from past mistakes and missteps, I would highlight one such exchange that took place within the digital space of a Turkic world internet forum.

The exchange began when a Turkish professor of Turkish Literature, breaking ranks from the Turkish Language Society's approved naming convention for the *Türkçeleri* of Central Asia wrote in to the Turkoloji-L news and discussion group to advocate use of the *–ce/ca/çe/ça* suffix to refer to the Turkic languages--e.g., *Azerice*, *Özbekçe*, *Kırgızca,* etc.--as the most economical and effective means of ensuring proper recognition of their status as languages. In reply to this "classic point of discussion," a

Turkish student of Turcology wrote back to question whether the professor truly believed that referring to the Turkic languages in this manner indicated language status. Admitting that for economy's sake, he too was prone to abbreviate the names of the Turkic languages in daily speaking, he nonetheless noted that his Turkic friends interpreted such abbreviations as tantamount to referring to their native tongues as dialects (*lehçeler*) or patois (*şiveler*) of Turkish rather than fully-fledged languages within the Turkic language family. In this sense, the Turcology student argued, using the *–ce/ca/çe/ça* suffix to designate the Turkic languages was no different than referring to them as *Azeri Türkçesi, Özbek Türkçesi,* or *Kırgız Türkçesi*, a naming convention that he likewise criticized as tainted by political considerations. In conclusion he suggested that while people uneducated on the topic of the Turkic languages were in the habit of using such contentious forms unreflexively, it was infinitely more problematic when well-respected professors in well-known departments of Turkish Literature advocated such usages, as their professional status not only generated interest in their opinions but also conferred authority to their words, thereby fostering the adoption of discursive practices that further served to a alienate the Turkic peoples.

Paralleling *Einbau-Ausbau* debates over linguistic classification, such discursive and metadiscursive negotiation over naming conventions for the Turkic languages, thus constituted a sociolinguistic site for contestation over the twin poles of national "independence" and supranational "interdependence" within Turkic world relations writ large. In this sense, there is one additional point about language names which is relevant to the negotiation of Turkic world relations, namely that the language names chosen by

the Turkic peoples themselves clearly identified a distinctive "national," or narrowly-defined "ethnic," identity for their speakers separate from their broader, collective ethnic identity as Turks. Thus whereas in the naming convention favored by the Ministry of Culture and the Turkish Language Society (e.g., *Kırgız Türkçesi*, *Özbek Türkçesi*, and *Türkmen Türkçesi*), the national, or narrowly-defined ethnic, identity of the various Turkic peoples (e.g., *Kırgız*, and *Özbek*, *Türkmen*) served solely as a modifier of their broader ethnic identity as Turks, as befit a broader Turkic world consciousness, in the naming convention chosen by the Turkic peoples, the narrowly-defined ethnic or national designation applied under the Soviet system served as the sole designation of identity.

In this sense, contestation over naming conventions for the Turkic languages recalled parallel debates over naming conventions for the Turkic nations and peoples themselves. Thus, for example, Turkish members of the Turkic world community of practice generally suggested using both the narrower "national" and broader "ethnic" terms when referring to the Turkic peoples individually (e.g., *Özbek Türk*) and including the modifier *Türk* in addition to the "national" designation when referencing the individual republics (e.g., *Özbek Türk Cumhuriyeti*) since, as suggested by Turkish ICTAS delegate Osman Fikri Sertkaya: "The term Uzbek has existed since the 16th century [but even] today Uzbeks living in the steppes far from cities and in the mountains call themselves Turks." Isolated pockets aside, the Turkic peoples, however, chose to refer to themselves solely by their narrow "national" identity (e.g., *Özbek*), and not only omitted the recommended modifier *Türk* in referring to their countries, but also chose to employ the Latin-derived Russian term *respublika*, adopted into the Turkic languages

during the creation of the Turkic republics under the Soviets, rather than the Arabic-derived Turkish term *cumhuriyet*, which also existed in various spellings within the Turkic languages, as the term for "republic," thus opting for *Azerbaycan Respublikası*, *Kazakstan Respublikası*, *Kırgız Respublikası*, *Özbekistan Respublikası*, and *Türkmenistan*.

Thus, in the names chosen by the Turkic peoples themselves to refer to their languages, their republics, and themselves--and here it is important to note that I speak not only of formal government-level decisions concerning such official names, but the continual informal defense of these names enacted iteratively in more mundane interactions between Turks and the Turkic peoples--we find an explicit *Ausbau* rejection of the broad Turkic identity that lay at the very heart of an imagined Turkic world, even as that meant the retention of names and Russian loanwords held over from the Soviet era. In this sense, I am reminded of Fishman's (1993b) "Language Y" factor discussed in the previous chapter. While Russian may have constituted the greatest threat to the continued survival of their native languages during the Soviet era, in the post-Soviet era, the greater perceived "Language Y" (and, by extension, "Culture Y") threat originated from Turkey. As Turkish language and culture was progressively associated with the negative connotations of "cooptive" *Einbau*, Russian language and culture became increasingly less threatening, to the point that it could be, and often was, employed by the Turkic peoples as an explicit symbol of their difference. In this sense, while Turks critiqued the use of *respublika* as evidence of the russification of the Turkic peoples and their languages, for the Turkic peoples, the term was an expression of their shared history

under the Soviet Union, and, more abstractly, their collective distinctiveness from the Turks.

The Turkic peoples' use of the Russian language for broader communicative purposes also became a means not only of avoiding being subjected to potentially condescending assessments of their native Turkic language or of their facility in Turkish, but also a mark of distinction from the Turks. Indeed, it seemed that the more Turks criticized the Turkic peoples as "russified," the more the Turkic peoples circled their wagons around Russian, creating distinct language barriers by, for example, clustering together with other Turkic peoples in Russian-speaking groups at Turkic world events, as Turks gathered separately in opposing corners. [64] This, in turn, was misunderstood by Turks, who interpreted it as further evidence of the Turkic peoples' russification. Moreover, it was the decidedly *Ausbau* sentiment involved in the Turkic peoples' marked choice to use Russian that, much to the dismay of the Turks, prompted the not infrequent suggestion that Russian, rather than Turkish, or even a mutually formulated Turkic *ortak dil*, might best serve as a *lingua franca* for communication within the Turkic world. As a Kazakh delegate to one of the Turkic world conferences I attended noted, "Tell me, why are the Turks so resistant to learning Russian? They've had no problem learning English to communicate with the West. They say that we're speaking the language of the

[64] Indeed, it was my knowledge of Russian that granted me access to the groups of Central Asians clustered in their separate corners at Turkic world congresses which my Turkish counterparts often seemed unable, or unwilling, to break into. Nonetheless, I did generally find that the Central Asians, upon recognizing that I was better able to communicate in Turkish than Russian, were willing to speak to me in Turkish, since, as a non-native speaker myself, I was less likely to have a pejorative opinion of their facility in Turkish.

conqueror, and that we should return to our mother tongues, but this doesn't solve the problem of how we would communicate with one another. Wouldn't it be less trouble for the Turks to learn Russian than for all of us to learn Turkish?"

In the final analysis, it was to the enduring detriment of Turkic world relations that the Turks were never quite able to comprehend the amicable, if sometimes complicated, relationship the Turkic peoples maintained with their Soviet past. Where the Turks saw domination and passive assimilation, by and large, the Turkic peoples accepted remnants of Russian language and culture as an integral part of their respective historical narratives. Although this was not always the case for those Turkic peoples, like the Tatars, whose countries still lay within Russia's borders, the Central Asians had a more burnished attitude toward their Soviet past, which fondly recalled the birth of their nations and the creation of their national languages. In this sense, the near enemy, linguistically and culturally, had become Turkey rather than Russia, for while the latter had failed in its attempt to forcibly assimilate the Turkic peoples, the latter was now perceived as attempting to absorb them into a Turkish-led Turkic world.

Where the Turkic peoples resisted the Turks' increasingly "cooptive" *Einbau* efforts through recourse to Russian, the Turks saw further evidence of their russification and an even greater need to help them rediscover their "lost" Turkic identity. In the Turks' defense, it was often difficult to determine whether recourse to Russian within the general Turkic publics, and even among Turkic members of the Turkic world community of practice, was rooted in reliance or resistance, for genuine reliance on Russian among the Turkic elite was an indisputable artifact of the Soviet era, which, in the early days of

Turkic rapprochement, before *Ausbau* sentiment had taken hold, the Turkic peoples themselves had been wont to bemoan. Ultimately, however, regardless of the Turkic peoples' underlying purpose, for the Turks, the real sticking point vis-à-vis Russian was ideological, as it belied the very basis of an imagined Turkic world unity and dashed dreams of its eventual fruition to have the Turkic peoples seem to demonstrate a preference for Russian over their native Turkic languages.

WOULD THE "REAL" TURK PLEASE STAND UP?

The proper way by which to refer individually to the respective Turkic peoples and nations aside, the larger question of how to refer to the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples collectively remained--a debate that paralleled the larger question of language classification and went to the very essence of negotiation over the nature of the putative Turkic world and relations among its constituent peoples. I was first introduced to the politics of naming conventions for referring collectively to the Turkic peoples in an early interview with an erstwhile scholar employed by the Turkish government at the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (*Türk İşbirliği Kalkınma ve İdaresi Başkanlığı--TİKA*), a branch of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs founded in 1992 to promote economic, commercial, technical, social, cultural and educational cooperation with the new Turkic republics, who insisted that the term "Turkic" (and the analogous construction of "*Tiurkskii*" in Russian) had been devised by Britain and Russia during the

"Great Game"[65] era as a means of dividing Turks from one another by introducing a false linguistic distinction which ultimately changed the way the Turkic peoples, writ large, thought about one another. Drawing on popular linguistic misconceptions about the correlation between the existence of multiple words for a concept within a language and the worldview of its speakers,[66] he argued that the ultimate design in creating such a term was to divide, and hence rule, the Turks, who having no separate word to distinguish between Turks of Turkey and those of Central Asia, had always conceived of themselves as one people. The divisive effect of such policies, he argued, was reflected in the recent advent of numerous Turkish neologisms for the word "Turkic." This was an argument I was to hear repeatedly throughout my fieldwork.

Leaving aside accusations regarding the Great Game rivals' attempts to hinder Turkic unification and separate the Turks of Central Asia from their Turkish cousins by introducing a term to distinguish between the two groups where none existed, the absence of an equivalent term for "Turkic" in Turkish or the Turkic languages was the cause of some consternation in the post-Soviet era among both the Turkish and Turkic peoples, for largely pragmatic, but also existential, reasons. Thus, while many Turks within the community of practice actively engaged in promoting linguistic and sociocultural rapprochement among the Turkic peoples insisted that *Türk* was the only appropriate and "linguistically correct" adjectival and nominal form by which to refer to the Turkic

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[65] The term Great Game refers to the strategic rivalry waged from 1813 to 1907 between Victorian Britian and Tsarist Russia for supremacy in Central Asia. For a detailed history of the Great Game, see Hopkirk (1994).

[66] See, for example, Martin (1986) and Whorf (1940).

peoples, recommending and employing such phrases as *Türk cumhuriyetleri* (Turkish republics), *Türk halkları* (Turkish peoples), *Türk boyları* (Turkish tribes), *Orta Asyalı Türkler* (Central Asian Turks), etc. to refer to the Turkic republics and peoples, journalists and the general Turkish public were more concerned with the pragmatic need for a less ambiguous term by which to refer to the Turkic peoples. As a result, such modifiers as *Türkî*, *Türksel*, and *Türkik*, *Türk asıllı*, (of Turkish origin), *Türk kökenli* (with Turkish roots) were devised to refer to the Turkic republics and peoples.

Although the urge to speak separately of the Turkic peoples would, at first glance, seem to suggest an emergent recognition of their distinctiveness, in actual practice, it appeared to be more of an artifact both of the unexamined Turkish belief in Turkey's leading role among the Turkic peoples and of the Turkish tendency, as noted by Turan and Turan, "to view other Turkic states as constituting a reasonably homogeneous whole, not harbouring significant conflicts of interest among themselves" (1998:188). In other words, where it seemed strange to speak of Turkey's foreign policy toward the Turks, it seemed equally unnecessary to speak of Turkey's foreign policy toward Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, etc., when that approach was largely based on their all being "Turks." In this sense, Turkish interest in a term by which to reference the Turkic peoples seemed to suggest a concern in separating the "other" from "self," while nonetheless retaining the "other" as akin to "self," and was hence indicative of the exceptionalism accorded Turkey, best captured by the phrase "*Türkiye ve Türk cumhuriytleri.*" And yet, those with a vested interest in maintaining the notion of broader unified Turkish identity as the foundation upon which the Turkic world rested abjured.

In an editorial for *Cumhuriyet* newspaper entitled "*Türk Cumhuriyetleri mi, Türki Cumhuriyetler mi, Türksel Cumhuriyetler mi?*"[67] professor of literature and linguistics, Yusuf Çotuksöken, argues the inappropriateness of such neologisms in referring to the ex-Soviet Turkish republics, writing:

> In newspaper and journal publications, radio and television broadcasts, when presenting news regarding the Turkic republics, various qualifiers are used, such as: Turkish republics [*Türk cumhuriyetleri*], Turkic republics [*Türki cumhuriyetler*], republics of Turkish origin [*Türk asıllı cumhuriyetler*], republics with Turkish roots [*Türk kökenli cumhuriyetler*]. In the announcement of the 1992 *Milliyet* Awards, even the word Turkic [*Türksel*] was used…. Earlier in one of my articles, I suggested that from among these choices, the most correct, in my opinion, was Turkish republics [*Türk cumhuriyetleri*] because of its brevity and direct representation of the concept….
>
> Given the existence of the word Turkish [*Türk*], the revitalization of *Türkî* (alienating from its inception) which is already archaic in Turkey's Turkish must be some sort of passing fancy. Terms such as 'republics with Turk origins/roots' [*Türk asıllı/kökenli cumhuriyetler*] serve no other purpose than prolonging the discussion. I also wonder about this: are we to say… the Azerbaijan Republic with Turk origins/roots [*Türk asıllı/kökenli Azerbaycan Cumhuriyet*]? Utter nonsense. As for the word *Türksel*, it is rooted in the anxiety of Turk(ish)ifying the word *Türkî*. A misplaced and unnecessary neologism…. I tend to think that those in favor of alternate usages have a lot to say on the subject. To tell the truth, I am also curious about their explanations. In the meantime, some person among us who is an admirer of the Ottomans and Ottoman language might get up and ask why we don't use "Republics of Turkey" [*cemahir-i Türkiye*]. I say that ensuring full communication depends on us making the right choice [for referencing the Turkic peoples].[68]

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[67] Çotuksöken has chosen to omit the circumflex over the final letter *i* in *Türkî*.

[68] Çotuksöken's article appeared in *Cumhuriyet* September 22, 1992, p.2. The translation is mine.

Although Çotuksöken was, no doubt, correct in his assessment that finding a mutually acceptable means of referring to the Turkic republics, peoples, and languages was of the utmost importance in ensuring open communicative channels that would allow the disparate Turkic peoples to coalesce under the rubric of a unified and cohesive Turkic world, this was no easy task within a context in which the linguistic field of meaning was already so ideologically charged. By arguing that *Türk cumhuriyetleri* (Turkish republics) was the "most correct" means of referring to the Turkic peoples because of "its brevity and direct representation of the concept" and that "those in favor of alternate usages have a lot to say on the topic," Çotuksöken depicts the various neologisms for "Turkic" as politically and ideologically driven and *Türk cumhuriyetleri* as the unmarked, neutral choice.

But this is not how it was perceived by the Turkic peoples. While many of the Turkic peoples did entertain a sense of their broader ethnic identity as Turks, the term *Türk*, used both as a noun and an adjective, had, like *Türkçe*, become so associated with the Turkish republic (*Türkiye*) and its citizens (*Türkler*), that its application to the Turkic peoples seemed to subsume their identity to the Anatolian Turks rather than uniting all Turks on equal terms under a broad ethnic umbrella. By thus seeming to suggest Turkey's "superiority" or "natural" leading role in the Turkic world, application of the term *Türk* to the Turkic peoples could thus hardly be considered non-ideological. In this sense, use of the term had a decidedly "cooptive" *Einbau* feel that, in suggesting a hierarchy of membership in the imagined Turkic world, clearly contradicted the more egalitarian, EU-like supranational community favored by the Turkic peoples.

By the same token, however, many of the Turkic peoples felt that they had an equivalent, if not greater, claim to the ethnonym *Türk*, as suggested by Azerbaijan's initial interest in naming their language *Türk dili*, and resented its having been usurped by the Anatolian Turks. In this sense, the artificially constructed neologisms invented to reference the Turkic peoples, although praiseworthy for recognizing the Turkic peoples' distinctiveness from their Turkish cousins, were criticized for seeming to imply a derivative or lesser status. Although this was particularly evident in the terms *Türk asıllı* and *Türk kökenli*, which, while meant to suggest descent from a common proto-Turk ancestor, like *Türk dili*, could not help but imply a status derivative of contemporary Turks, other neologisms were similarly problematic. Writing as a representative of the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples, Enver Mahmut describes the Turkic peoples' objections to the term *Türkî* in an article published in *Millî Kültür Dergisi* and entitled "Some Thoughts on the Present-Day Problems of the Turkic Dialects" ("*Türk Lehçelerinin Bugünkü Sorunları Hakkında Bazı Düşünceler*"). He writes:

> As is known, in modern Turcology, the word Turk is used [both]…in the narrow or special sense when speaking of the Turkish citizen, the Turkish people, and the Turkish language… [and in the broad sense] as a general noun for the brethren people who are very close to one another and who are in possession of an enormous territory stretching today from the Balkans to the interior of Mongolia and China as well as for the dialects they speak…. From this perspective Turcologists of Turkic origin in the Soviet Union regard the use of the derivative *Türkî* in place of *Türk* (for example when speaking of the Turkic people and languages) as misplaced and wish to make clear that the formation of this Turkish word is completely contrary and it not at all acceptable. As is known, the –î suffix being of Arabic origin, entered the Turkic dialects along with Arabic words. We would like to make clear that there is no logic to attaching this suffix--

> which has yet to be attached to a word of Turkic origin to form a single neologism--to the Turkic dialects and the name of the people who speak these dialects."[69]

It is furthermore important to note that not only did it strike many of the Turkic peoples as linguistically incongruous and illogical to attach an Arabic suffix to the term *Türk* in aid of distinguishing them from the Anatolian Turks, as Mahmut argues, but to do so also seemed to call into question the "purity" of the Turkic peoples. Although the Turkic peoples were generally not troubled by Arabic influence on their languages (Arabic, like Russian, was not a problematic "Language Y" as it was for the Turks), they were nonetheless well aware of the Turkish campaign to "purify" their language of Arabic influence, and suspected that the application of an Arabic suffix to the term *Türk* in referring to the Turkic peoples carried, whether consciously or unconsciously, the implication that they had been "corrupted" by Arab influence, thereby insinuating that the Turkic peoples were not "real" Turks in the manner of their Turkish cousins. As the Kazakh scholar who broached this issue remarked, it seemed impossible that one letter could carry so much meaning, and yet that particular suffix not only suggested that the Turkic peoples were somehow lesser versions of Turks, but called into question their very Turk-ness.

At the same time, other, more artificially fabricated neologisms constructed from foreign-sourced suffixes were even more egregious. In short, there seemed to be no solution that was generally tolerable to the Turkic peoples. To use the term *Türk* as a

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[69]This quote is taken from an article that appeared in *Millî Kültür* November 1990, No.78, p.22. The translation is mine.

modifier to refer to the Turkic peoples was unacceptable to most, because, in failing to recognize the distinctiveness of the Turkic peoples and using a term associated with Turkey's Turks, it implied a derivative status, but to use *Türkî* or another fabricated neologism was likewise unacceptable to most, because it seemed to suggest that they were not "real" Turks in the manner of Turkey's Turks and hence implied a lesser standing. The rampant dissatisfaction with all available options associated with this crucial issue of identity suggests the incipient *reactive* nature of *Ausbau* tendencies among the Turkic peoples, whereby attempts either to "include" or "exclude" the Turkic peoples under a broader Turkish ethnic identity were perceived as "cooptive" and thus resisted or rejected automatically.

By the same token, there were indications that the majority of Turks involved in negotiating the dimensions of Turkic world relations were becoming increasingly intransigent, unable or unwilling to examine their ideological presuppositions concerning Turkic world relations in aid of correcting persistent misunderstandings that hindered linguistic and sociocultural rapprochement among the Turkic peoples. This was particularly apparent in negotiations over another term coined to refer to the Turkic peoples that was ostensibly designed to be less politically divisive. The phrase *Türkçe konuşan* (Turkish speaking), used as a modifier when referencing the Turkic republics/countries/peoples of the former Soviet Union (as in *Türkçe konuşan cumhuriyetler/ülkeler/insanlar)*, was a solution that appealed to many Turks not only because it sidestepped the ideologically fraught practice of fabricating neologisms, but also because it highlighted linguistic, rather than ethnic, kinship as the essential

commonality shared by the Turkic peoples, thereby rebuffing international and domestic critics who claimed that interest in a Turkic world was racist and revanchist in nature. In addition, the term seemed to provide a means of referring to the Turkic peoples as a whole, as it could be applied equally, and hence collectively, both to the Anatolian Turks and to the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples, thus avoiding phrases such as *Türkiye ve Türk cumhuriyetleri* than seemed to suggest Turkish exceptionalism. Finally, in addition to its use as a modifier, it could also be used as an adjectival noun to refer to the Turkic peoples themselves, as in *Türkçe konuşan* (Turkish speaker).

Given these many advantages, the phrase was viewed almost as a panacea to persistent misunderstandings that hindered Turkic rapprochement, and was quickly adopted in state-level discourse, most notably in the name given the bi-annual gathering of heads of state from Turkey, and the five Turkic republics, which was dubbed *Türkçe Konuşan Ülkeler Devlet Başkan Zirvesi* (Summit of Heads of State of the Turkish Speaking Countries).[70] By this point it should, however, be clear that from the perspective of the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples, the conspicuous problem with the phrase was that it suggested that the Turkic peoples all spoke *Türkçe*, the official language of Turkey. As a result of such criticism, the phrase *Türk dili konuşan* (Turkish language speaking) was eventually adopted in its stead, and the name of the summit changed to *Türk Dili Konuşan Ülkeler Zirvesi* (Summit of Countries Speaking the Turkish

[70] While originally conceived as a bi-annual meeting, in actuality meetings have become more or less frequent, often based on the state of relations among the countries. To date, the summit has been convened ten times--in 1992, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2001, 2006, 2009, and 2010.

Language), which it remains to this day. That this change was made, despite the fact that *Türk dili* carries the same connotation as *Türkçe* for the Turkic peoples, is emblematic of the blind adherence on the part of Turkish ideologues to the *Einbau* notion that the Turkic world rested on the foundation of a single, unitary language and their associated lack of understanding, or deliberate misunderstanding, of the Turkic peoples' discontent with having their languages referred to by a name long associate d with the specific brand of Turkish spoken in Turkey. This was all the more troublesome given how simple it would have been to change *Türkçe konuşan* to *Türk dilleri konuşan* (Turkic languages speaking) instead of *Türk dili konuşan* (Turkish language speaking), which would have struck the right balance for the Turkic peoples between national "independence" and supranational "interdependence," but was unacceptable to Turkish ideologues for reasons described above.

That *Türk dili*, even when intended in its more expansive meaning to include the Turkic "dialects," was indeed synonymous with *Türkçe* in the minds of most Turks is apparent in media coverage of the summits. Thus, reporting on the summit generally revolved around the cognitive dissonance between the *Türk dili* in the official name of the summit and the inability of its participants to speak *Türkçe*. For example, CNN Türk's coverage of the most recent summit focuses on the need for simultaneous translation during the event--a fact which was implicitly attributed not to a lack of mutual intelligibility among the Turkic languages, but rather to the continued "insistence" of the *Türk dili konuşanlar* on speaking Russian rather than their "native" *Türkçe*. To demonstrate this point, the Turkish reporter is shown repeatedly approaching staff of the

visiting Turkic dignitaries to ask: "*Türkçe konuşuyor musunuz?"* ("Do you speak Turkish?"), as the camera zooms in on the reactions she receives in response: the initial blank stares, the embarrassed, and almost inaudible, attempt to respond in a Turkic language, and the final annoyance with which the cameraman is waved off in Russian. No attempt was made to determine if these staffers, in fact, spoke a Turkic language, and the Turkish reporter seems oblivious to their initial attempts to respond in their native languages.[71] This then confirms the Turkic peoples' fear that *Türk dili* is synonymous with *Türkçe* in the minds of most Turks and justifies their discontent with the term. Furthermore, within the Turkish public, such media coverage serves to reinforce not only the naturalized connection between *Türk dili* and *Türkçe* but also the notion that the Turkic peoples are somehow deficient for relying on Russian rather than speaking their "native" Turkish. And thus the *Einbau-Ausbau* rift widens.

Interestingly, as disputes within the public sphere over the proper way in which to refer to the Turkic peoples ultimately revealed, and simultaneously contributed to, a widening *Ausbau-Einbau* rift in the putative Turkic world community, the same question, taken up within the confines of a Turkic world online news and discussion group, resulted in the mutual spontaneous development of a more acceptable, albeit lesser known and less widely applicable, term for referring to the Turkic peoples. The term was Turk*, "where * is the Unix *," as noted by Turcologist Uli Schamiloglu, who appropriated the term and expanded its use to refer to the Turk* languages in outlining

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71 Please see: http://video.cnnturk.com/2010/haber/9/16/turk-dili-zirvesi-ama-turkce-bilen-az, last accessed August 2, 2011.

directives on language use for participation in the news and discussion group.[72] In other words, it was a term that employed an asterisk or "wildcard" character common to the UNIX operating system in which the "asterisk matches any number of characters in a filename, including none."[73] Extrapolating from this definition, the use of the asterisk enables users of Turk* to sidestep the divisive ideological issues associated with employing the term *Türk* or any of the Turkish neologisms revived or contrived to designate "Turkic" (e.g., *Türkî*, *Türkik*, and *Türksel*), allowing both the writer and the reader to imagine what they will.

In this sense, Turk* not only implicitly acknowledges the dispute between those who make no distinction between the Turkic peoples and those who insist on a distinction, but in so doing also suggests an *über*-category of Turk, from which all Turkic peoples can be independently specified. As such, it offers a more egalitarian and "cooperative" means of representing relations within the Turkic world that imagined all Turkic peoples united under a broad "umbrella" identity, the very premise behind notions of a greater "*Türk* dünyası*," or Turk* world.[74] Although widely adopted within the online forum, Turk* never caught on more widely. This can likely be attributed to the fact, that despite being an elegant circumvention of ideological divides, it was not only

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[72] Quote taken from Uli Schamiloglu's Introduction to Turkistan.Newsletter found at: http://web.archive.org/web/19990117000239/http://www.euronet.nl/users/sota/turkistan.htm, last accessed August 2, 2011.

[73] Please see: http://unix.t-a-y-l-o-r.com/USwild.html, last accessed August 2, 2011.

[74] Turk* also works in English, where it avoids ideological contestation by allowing both the writer and the reader to imagine the appropriate adjectival suffix (i.e., -ish or -ic) for the root word "Turk."

not applicable within spoken language, but also relied on a referential link to rather specialized knowledge about computer programming not commonly possessed by average computer users, let alone the general public. Nonetheless, the spontaneous emergence of the term, particularly within the context of a Turkic world forum with broad bilateral membership suggests a genuine, if limited, attempt to reach across the widening *Einbau-Ausbau* divide in Turkic world relations.

CONCLUSION

In concluding this chapter, it is important to step back for a moment to reiterate the inherently ideological nature of the diffuse debate that marked the second stage of post-Cold War relations in the Turkic world, by noting what was self-evident to those involved, both within the Turkic world community of practice and the general publics of the respective republics, namely that issues of linguistic classification and naming conventions were contentious precisely because it was implicitly understood by all parties that attitudes and perceptions concerning language forms and usage were intimately linked with values and belief structures about the material world. More particularly, perceptions of language status were understood to equate to perceptions of speaker status and to thus bear important implications for the ordering of relations within the imagined Turkic world.

Thus, to refer to the Turkic languages as "dialects," with the intended or unintended implication that they were dialects of contemporary Turkish--i.e., to accord

them a lesser linguistic status by designating them with a lesser linguistic category--was tantamount to declaring the Turkic peoples a "lesser" peoples than their Turkish counterparts. Likewise, to revive or contrive fabricated neologisms to distinguish the Turkic peoples from their so-called Turkish cousins was no different than declaring them somehow "derivative" of the "original." Moreover, to insist on calling the Turkic languages "*X Türkçesi*" and the Turkic peoples themselves "*X Türk*" was to seek to coopt their distinct identities into a broader Turkish identity defined by, and hence epitomized by, the Turks of Turkey, within which the Turkic peoples would never measure up to their Turkish cousins and thus could never be considered equal partners. In this sense, the Turkic peoples' rejection of the linguistic classificatory schema and naming conventions proposed by their Turkish counterparts constituted an explicit *Ausbau* response to the perceived "cooptive" *Einbau* intent of the latter and was thus tantamount to repudiating not only their inclusion under a broad umbrella of Turkish identity, the very basis upon which the Turkic world was imagined, but also Turkey's self-appointed leadership role in the creation of this unified Turkic world and hence Turkish "superiority" within it.

The Turkic peoples' resistance to being linguistically and socioculturally subsumed to their Turkish cousins during this second phase of post-Soviet Turkic world relations was, however, most evident in the failure of the *ortak alfabe* to take hold within the Turkic republics. In retrospective discussions and interviews with delegates to, participants in, and interested observers of the early linguistic congresses, the composite picture that emerged of the conundrum as to how it was that the Turkic delegates could

have come to a consensus with their Turkish counterparts and ratified an *ortak alfabe* proposal on the one hand, and then, on the other, returned to their respective countries to participate in national orthographic debates that ultimately settled on alphabets which diverged from the *ortak alfabe* proposal they had endorsed, revealed a deep-seated, although then still nascent, concern over not only the resulting linguistic effects on their respective languages, but also the long-term implications for Turkic world relations of adopting the Turkish alphabet as a base for their respective national orthographies. More specifically, the budding discontent that simmered just under the surface at the time of the early language congresses appears to have been rooted in the nagging suspicion among the Turkic delegates that while the *Einbau* project of creating a common alphabet was billed as an exercise in supranational interdependence, its ostensibly "cooperative" spirit nonetheless masked "cooptive" tendencies on the part of its Turkish organizers which threatened the independence of their languages and fledgling national identities.

While the Turkic delegates' unease about the linguistic and social ramifications of accepting a common orthography based on the Turkish alphabet--implicit both in concerns over inclusion in the *ortak alfabe* of graphemes for the phonetic features distinctive to their respective languages as well as in the inclusion within the *ortak alfabe* proposals presented by Turkic scholars of several letters represented by a different character in the Turkish alphabet--remained unspoken during the course of the early linguistic congresses, largely in deference to the ostensibly "cooperative" *Einbau* spirit of the proceedings, the explicitly "cooptive" *Einbau* Turkish approach to related issues surrounding linguistic rapprochement among the Turkic peoples, that became manifest in

the aftermath of the congresses through ambient-level debate over linguistic classification and naming conventions, created a widespread impression of the Turks' sense of their own "superiority" within the hierarchy of Turkic world relations that caused the delegates to reevaluate the implicit nature of the *ortak alfabe* project. In response, not only did the delegates forsake the *ortak alfabe*, choosing to support national orthographies in its stead, but they also struck back at the very ideological presupposition behind the convention of the early linguistic congresses that had been laid bare by the ambient level discourses that ensued, by openly asserting the flawed nature of the Turkish alphabet from a "scientific" standpoint. Thus, in the words of one eminent Azerbaijani linguist, whose views typified this increasingly common assertion:

> It's true that the Cyrillic alphabet imposed on us by the Russians did great damage to our languages, but we were forced to accept these letters. The Turks, by contrast, were free to devise whatever alphabet they wanted, and yet wound up adopting an alphabet that violates the basic sound symmetry that is the foundation for all Turkic languages. In the same way that you need front vowels /i/, /ø/, and /y/ to complement back vowels /ɯ/, /o/, and /u/, if you have /k/, /e/, and /h/, then you need their counterparts /q/, /æ/, and /x/. Villagers in Turkey still have these sounds, but they've been lost in standard Turkish because there aren't any letters to represent them. We saw a new alphabet as an opportunity to correct the deficiencies of the old alphabet, but the Turks wanted us to adopt their alphabet with all its problems. Even today, Turkish linguists admit that there are many problems with the Turkish alphabet. It got pushed through too quickly and the problems overlooked. The Turks could have used this as an opportunity to correct their own alphabet, but instead they simply tried to push their alphabet on us. Why would we want to adopt an alphabet with so many admitted problems?

Had the *ortak alfabe* debates been undertaken within a national context, a new alphabet could have been implemented, despite objections on the part of parties whose

interests it did not represent, through the efforts of central government and then legitimized by a host of state institutions as Bourdieu (1991) describes, in much the way that both the Turkish alphabet reform and the republican alphabet reforms among the Turkic peoples were accomplished. Resistance to its hegemony, if not precluded by misrecognition, would at least have been much slower to emerge. By contrast, within the supranational context of the Turkic world, the absence of a single central authority and lack of shared social institutions meant that successful implementation of the *ortak alfabe* relied on generating genuine consensus rather than institutionalized misrecognition. Where the *ortak alfabe* effort foundered was in failing to foster true consensus as befit the "cooperative" *Einbau* effort it purported to be, attempting instead to perpetuate a misrecognition of the Turkish alphabet as the "natural" choice for orthographic unity among the Turkic peoples.

Without the institutional means to effect this misrecognition, however, the Turks were unable to effectively disguise the underlying ideological presumption in the "superiority" of their alphabet and sociopolitical interest in seeing it adopted across the Turkic world from the Turkic peoples, who responded, in *Ausbau* manner, by creating their own idiosyncratic alphabets, just as they insisted on referring to their native tongues as languages rather than dialects, naming themselves, their languages, and their republics by reference to a narrow "national" identity rather than a broad "ethnic" identity, and speaking Russian when it suited them as patent markers of their collective distinctiveness from their Turkish cousins.

Thus, coming full-circle, I end this chapter by returning to the argument concerning the nature of debate I laid forth at its beginning in order to suggest that the adoption of an ontology of debate that focuses exclusively on the more formal and discrete instances within what, I would argue, amounts to a continuum of debate types may ultimately preclude the development of an understanding of the ways in which language policies and procedures generally agreed upon in formal debate contexts inevitably represent the interests of certain parties over others (Tollefson 1991) and, in so doing, frequently contradict local linguistic culture (Schiffman 1998a), thereby occasioning active or passive resistance--discursive or metadiscursive contestation--that ultimately works to mitigate their successful implementation (Hornberger 1998).

Chapter Five: Linguistic Ideology and the Political Economy of Orthographic Practice in Turkey

The Turkish people who know how to protect their country, their lofty independence, must also rescue their language from the yoke of foreign languages (*Ülkesini, yüksek istiklâlini korumasını bilen Türk milleti, dilini de yabancı diller boyunduruğundan kurtarmalıdır*).

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk
September 2, 1930[75]

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this dissertation thus far has been on the political and ideological dimensions of cooperation and conflict inherent to efforts aimed at creating a common Turkic alphabet and otherwise effecting linguistic rapprochement amongst the Turkic peoples, particularly the ideological tension between an initial shared belief in supranational ethnocultural solidarity and linguistic mutual intelligibility that inspired the *ortak alfabe* and *ortak dil* projects during the first "euphoric" stage of post-Soviet relations in the Turkic world and the emergent sense of national distinctiveness and concerns over perceived Turkish "superiority" that subsequently hindered linguistic and sociocultural rapprochement under the rubric of the Turkic world during the second "sobering" phase of post-Soviet relations among the Turkic peoples. By contrast, this and the following chapter focus on domestic language ideological debates within Turkey proper that emerged as issues of language and orthography took on an expanded significance within Turkey following the collapse of the Soviet Union, embedded not

[75] As quoted in Çelik (1990:30).

only in the reawakening of pan-Turkist sentiment that heralded linguistic rapprochement and a mutual "return" to the essentials of Turk-ness, but also in the burgeoning opportunities of the post-Cold War era for further integration with the West, including accession to the European Union, that reanimated long-standing domestic struggles between cultural conservatives and social progressives, frequently waged through the instrumentality of language, over the nature of the Turkish nation and its geopolitical place in the global order.

Although it goes without saying that the collapse of the Soviet Union inaugurated a new chapter in the history of the Turkic republics of Central Asia and the Caucasus, more overlooked in studies of Turkic world relations is the social and political upheaval that the end of the Cold War era spelled for the Turkish Republic. The sudden demise of the Soviet Union precipitated a crisis in Turkey's foreign policy orientation, which had long been based on its role as a "buffer state" between the USSR and the West (Fuller and Lesser 1993, Mango 1994, Rittenburg 1998), amplifying fears, particularly among conservative elements within Turkish society, that the emergence of the United States as the sole remaining superpower would spell heightened American cultural imperialism and increased Western influence, even as it afforded the promise of expanded ties with the Turkic world and the possibility of parlaying such ties into enhanced international standing. Meanwhile, on the domestic political front, the late 1980s and early 1990s were marked by an economic and sociocultural opening triggered by the relaxation of long-standing statist traditions under President Turgut Özal (Heper and Sayarı 2002),

which provided average Turks easier access to the wider world and enabled their greater participation in the increasingly technologically-linked global community.

Given that issues of language and orthography have broadly served as a bellwether for much of the social and political upheaval and transformation that defines Turkish history, it should come as no surprise that shifts in orthographic practice emerged during the liminal period following the collapse of the Soviet Union when the possibility, indeed the necessity, of forging new sociopolitical alliances was palpable, and efforts at uniting the Turkic world through an *ortak alfabe* bore the symbolic power of orthography in indexing national identity and international affiliations into the limelight. This chapter, then, explores the ideological underpinnings and political economy of recent orthographic practice in Turkey, focusing on orthographic innovations and associated metalinguistic discourses emerging within the context of shifting global relations in the post-Cold war era which, in explicitly rejecting orthographic purism and embracing Western orthographic influence, constituted an ideological challenge to the foreign policy orientation favored by cultural conservatives, including the community of practice of linguists and language professionals actively engaged in promoting linguistic, sociocultural, and geopolitical rapprochement within the Turkic world.

In this sense, I would argue that such orthographic innovations initiated as "acts of identity" by Turkish social progressives and rapidly adopted within the general populace as a creative performative choice, in conjunction with the response they evoked from cultural conservatives, constituted another diffuse language ideological debate. This debate, enacted largely through the instrumentality of orthographic praxis, not only

culminated in a subsequent quasi-formal online metalinguistic debate over the politics of Turkish orthographic practice described in the next chapter, but also served to complicate and ultimately hinder the dynamics of supranational linguistic and sociocultural rapprochement during the second stage of Turkic world relations.

In this sense, the diffuse language ideological debate explored in this chapter, although ostensibly unrelated to efforts to create a common Turkic alphabet was nonetheless linked to the politics of linguistic rapprochement among the Turkic peoples in several ways: first, through the event that precipitated the debate, namely changes to the global order occasioned by the collapse of the Soviet Union; second, through the object of interest, namely orthography; and, third, through the actors, namely the Turkish linguists and language professionals who, having long positioned themselves as "guardians" of the Turkish language, were actively pursuing linguistic, sociocultural, and geopolitical rapprochement among the Turkic peoples with an eye towards strengthening the Turkish language by not only "claiming" millions of additional speakers but also reintroducing "native" sources of linguistic enrichment as a counterbalance to ever increasing "foreign" linguistic influence from the West.

By contrast, the Turkic members of the Turkic world community of practice came largely to view Turkey's contemporary struggle against foreign orthographic influence, coupled with the country's checkered history of orthographic reform, as clear proof of the unsuitability of the Turkish alphabet to act as the base for a common Turkic orthography. Thus, with Turkic members of the Turkic world community of practice suggesting that their Turkish counterparts might want to address the issue of Western linguistic influence

on the Turkish language before taking the high ground to condemn the Turkic peoples for allowing Russian to "contaminate" their languages not to mention resolve their own domestic struggles over orthography before seeking to "dictate" orthographic policy across the Turkic world, Turkish linguists and language professionals took stock of the dimensions of contemporary linguistic politics at home and set about efforts to once again "purify" their language and alphabet, the contamination of which they blamed not only on the pernicious outside influence of foreign powers, but also their perceived local proxies in the form of Turkish social progressives who willingly introduced foreignisms into the language.

THE POLITICS OF "PURISM" AND "VERNACULARITY"

Concern over the "purity" of one's language is apparently so common throughout history that the Concise Oxford Dictionary makes especial mention of language purism in defining a "purist" as a "stickler for, affecter of, scrupulous purity, or nicety, esp. in language" (as quoted in Neustupný 1989:211). It should not be surprising, then, that language purity movements are among the most common types of formal language planning efforts. Within the language planning literature, "purism" describes the common tendency among language activists to seek to maintain or rediscover the "essence" of a particular language through efforts aimed at preventing or eliminating foreign elements and influence, with a particular emphasis on "intrusions" from "outside" languages perceived, for one reason or another, to be particularly dangerous rivals, as

well as the identification of "native" resources to be plumbed in aid of language enrichment (Annamalai 1979). According to foremost figure in the field of language planning, Joshua Fishman, "[l]anguage purity efforts are examples of attempts to 'clean up' messiness in the written language and to bring even educated spoken usage into greater conformity with the sharpened political differences that arise between polities and their associated cultures" (2006:28). Insofar as the nature of the "messiness" that requires "cleaning up" and the appropriate means of so doing are always interest-laden judgments on the part of individuals with particular sociopolitical interests, linguistic purism is an inherently ideological exercise. Indeed the very notion of "purity" when applied to social processes cannot escape conveying explicitly ideological overtones, as Shapiro notes in his introduction to a volume on the politics of language purism, writing:

> When a term with a pointedly moral valence is put into play in social processes, it cannot wholly lose that valence, even when efforts are made to neutralize its moral force. Every society is involved to some degree with identity politics, with separating peoples into groups with identities which form a hierarchy of worthiness, and one's language group membership is an important part of many of these identity politics processes. Clearly, then, attempts to 'purify' a language implicitly promotes those who can most closely identify themselves as belonging to the language base toward which the change is aimed to a position of moral superiority. And because purification implies getting rid of stain and thus evil, purification movements imply at some level that the impure language elements belong to impure persons. This impurity ascription makes it then possible to put people who cannot claim affiliation with the privileged language in a lesser moral space (1989:23).

In his historical review of language purity movements across the globe, Thomas (1991) further reinforces the assertion that linguistic purism is inherently ideological,

identifying no less than seven common ways in which language purists over the centuries have metaphorically described their role in efforts to expunge the pernicious effects of foreign influence from their respective languages. Without going into detail concerning the ways in which these self-described roles are applied to purifying a language, it is fair to say that whether the language purist conceives of him/herself as a miller, gardener, metallurgist, grinder, genealogist/ geneticist, physician, or priest, the implication is of a profession actively engaged in the separation of the "good" from the "bad" (e.g., grain from chaff, plant from weed, metal from mineral, disease from health).

Although formal language planning efforts are often organized around the principles of linguistic purism, prevailing cultural beliefs in the moral superiority of "pure" languages render the variety of less formal means of managing language purity even more widespread. As Fishman notes, "[t]here is a widespread popular assumption that proper languages are 'clean' or 'pure'" (2006:25), an assumption that Cameron (1995) explores in great depth within contemporary British English by examining the ways in which popular discourses concerning "proper" grammar and other "hygienic" linguistic practices reflect cultural beliefs concerning public probity, order, and reason as well as fears that "improper" usage signals encroaching immorality, disorder, and unreason. Thus, even divorced from formal language planning projects, popular attitudes concerning the value of language purity play an essential role in social processes, including the legitimization of particular languages and linguistic practices and their speakers over others. As Keating notes:

> Cultural beliefs in the possibility and value of maintaining a 'pure' language in the face of contaminating influences from 'outside' are common to many language communities. These ideas span a wide range from an association with particular local political projects to an association with generalized theories of morality, and from a focus on a single individual's identity to a focus on the state of society as a whole. Purism discourses relate past and present, reorganizing historical relationships and legitimizing some voices over others (2003:349).

At this juncture, I would, however, suggest that while the ideological underpinnings and sociopolitical contexts of linguistic purism, including the social and linguistic forces that precipitated the perceived necessity of purifying language, have been relatively well-studied, what has received less scholarly attention are the dynamics of resistance to language purity. In suggesting the value of attending to what I will term the explicit "politics of vernacularity" within a society, I borrow the term "vernacularity" from Joshua Fishman's (2006) ethnology of the hidden ideological agendas in formal corpus-planning projects discussed in the previous chapter. In the course of describing, opposing, and clustering the ideological underpinnings of formal language planning projects throughout the world, Fishman identifies not only the bipolar dimensions of *Ausbau* and *Einbau*, employed in chapter four to explore the dynamic tension between Turkish efforts to position the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples under a broader umbrella of supranational ethnolinguistic identity and the Turkic peoples determination to resist cooptation in favor of an independent national identity, but also that of "purism" versus "vernacularity," where purism, like *Ausbau*, is an expression of the desire for linguistic "independence" and vernacularity, like *Einbau*, suggests a preference for linguistic "interdependence." Thus, by contrast to purism, vernacularity describes the tendency for

speakers to eschew rigid and formal understandings of linguistic boundedness by welcoming, or at least tolerating, foreignisms and neologisms and celebrating linguistic heterodoxy and hybridity. In a broad sense, then, while purism can be understood as a subset of linguistic conservatism, vernacularity suggests a progressive laissez-faire approach to linguistic issues.

Although billed as bipolar opposites, Fishman's actual descriptions of the purity-vernacularity complex suggest that the two dimensions may not occupy diametrically opposed poles in actual practice. Since true vernacular openness is, according to Fishman, a relatively rare phenomenon, the value of including vernacularity as a counterpoint to purist protectionism appears to lie in their existing along a continuum such that some societies, or, more importantly, some elements within a society, may tolerate or embrace greater degrees of vernacularity than others. Thus, expanding on Fishman's description, I would argue that not only can vernacularity be a characteristic of the linguistic culture of a society, visible both in covert linguistic presumptions and overt language policies (Schiffman 1998a), but may also constitute a response to, or resistance of, the opposing dimension of purism within a society. In this sense, the expression of vernacularity, through the deliberate use of foreignisms, becomes a resource in identity politics and the struggle for sociopolitical power within a society. Thus, while vernacularity may provoke purism, it may also be provoked by purism, suggesting a certain synergism between the opposing ideological poles. In this sense, it is the very processes of purism that, ironically, creates the resources for vernacularists seeking to

oppose it, by explicitly marking foreignisms as foreign, thereby granting them symbolic power which they would not otherwise have carried.

For vernacularity to become a viable resource in identity politics, however, necessarily suggests that the forces of "misrecognition" described by Bourdieu (1991) must be incomplete. Thus, in situations in which linguistic purism is formally pursued by state-affiliated institutions, such as language societies, and its policies promulgated explicitly and implicitly through state institutions, including the public educational system and state-owned media outlets, one would expect, if Bourdieu's theory of the political economy of language were to hold, that citizens would "naturally" accept the superiority of pure linguistic forms as the state-legitimated currency of linguistic exchange affording access to social flexibility, political authority, and economic power. That speakers often appear not to embrace the ideology of purism as suggested by the ongoing or iterative nature of purism efforts in many societies--including among the French (Weinstein 1989), the Tamils (Schiffman 1999), and the Turks--not only implies that vernacularity may constitute a relatively "natural" consequence of linguistic contact (Makihara and Schieffelin 2007) against which purists feel the need to remain ever vigilant and that notions of purity--having more to do with attitudes and perceptions that are, in turn, based on "socio-cultural, political and historical factors which are external to language," than actual structural considerations or histories of language contact (Annamalai 1979:5)--are difficult to define in an abstract or global sense and must be continually revised as new "threats" present themselves, but also suggests the lack of full

integration of the linguistic marketplace and the existence of competing sources of valuation and legitimation of linguistic form.

THE ROOTS OF "PURISM" AND "VERNACULARITY" IN THE CREATION OF THE TURKISH REPUBLIC

Within the history of the Republic of Turkey, linguistic purism was instrumental in, and hence came to symbolize, the struggle to construct a strong, independent national identity out of the ashes of a multiethnic empire. Where the path to linguistic nationalism was relatively clear for the minority ethnic groups within the former empire, who had but to shed the imperial Ottoman language and return to their national languages which had survived largely intact under a system of diglossia, insofar as the Ottoman language was based on Turkish, with significant influence from Arabic and Persian, linguistic nationalism was more complicated for the titular ethnic group, involving extensive "purification" of the imperial language to rid it of the influence of languages now reclassified as "foreign."

In short, then, issues of language and orthography have been inextricably linked to national identity formation and foreign policy orientation in Turkey since the 1920s, when Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, founder of the Turkish republic, set in motion an ambitious program of social reforms designed to divorce Turkey from its Ottoman past and transform the Turkish people into a cohesive nation of literate, patriotic, and cosmopolitan citizens. Within this framework, language reforms, sought to overcome a

deep urban/rural linguistic divide attributable to the highly diglossic nature of the Ottoman state by more closely aligning the language of the new Turkish nation with that of the Turkish "folk." Orthographic reforms served the complementary purpose of bringing orthographic conventions in line with Turkish phonology,[76] as a means of remedying low literacy rates.[77] Together, the two reforms were designed to create a new Turkish polity unified at all levels by shared linguistic norms, which would, in turn, pave the way for further social reforms both by psychologically preparing the people for new reform measures and providing a medium for presenting them (Heyd 1954, Şimşir 1992, Lewis 1999).

Given the primacy accorded them by the Kemalist regime, linguistic reforms were carried out in record time. Such haste, while undoubtedly contributing to their success, undeniably cut short debate, however, with the result that certain "imperfections" in the alphabet as well numerous lexical neologisms contrived on the basis of dubious, or "unsound," linguistic principles were codified that have since become sites for animated discursive and metadiscursive contestation not to mention unintentional slippage. As a result, although official linguistic policies were then and have since been closely managed by the Turkish state and its proxies, in practice, language and orthography have proven perversely subject to natural language shift, deliberate political manipulation, and

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[76] "The Alphabet Commission rejected in principle the idea of a transliteration alphabet, because they did not wish Arabic and Persian pronunciations… to be perpetuated; they wanted them assimilated to Istanbul speech patterns (Lewis 1999:33).

[77] Head of the Ottoman Scientific Society, "Antepli Munif Pasha blamed the paucity of literates on the deficiencies of the alphabet" (Lewis 1999:28).

persistent external influences. As such, linguistic and orthographic choice in Turkey is imbued with a high degree of social meaning which provides speakers a powerful symbolic resource for social indexing and "acts of identity" (Le Page 1978, Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985) whereby "[t]he individual creates for himself the patterns of his linguistic behavior so as to resemble those of the group or groups with which from time to time he wishes to be identified or so as to be unlike those from whom he wishes to be distinguished" (1985:181).

In particular, the political economy of orthography in Turkey is largely defined by the give and take between the ideologies of linguistic "purism" and concomitant policies of the Turkish Language Society (Türk Dil Kurumu, or TDK), on the one hand, and by the processes of linguistic "vernacularity," or accommodation and appropriation of foreign influence, coupled with selective resistance to the TDK's linguistic initiatives, on the other. As a result, two competing, but equally powerful, sources of linguistic legitimation have emerged which are indexical of a broader deep-seated and long-standing political rift in Turkish society between social progressives and cultural conservatives that has come to a head in the post-Cold War global environment occasioned by the opening up of the post-Cold War era and the blossoming of new foreign policy opportunities within the region. Thus, whereas conservatives, often with pan-Turkist leanings, have tended to exercise control over the TDK and the Ministries of Culture and Education, whence the policies of linguistic purism are promulgated, Western-leaning progressives, the traditional "face" of the Kemalist intellectual elite, have largely been in charge of the country's select foreign-founded, private and public-

funded highschools and universities as well as elite media organizations, where the practice of linguistic vernacularity was born. In this sense, linguistic acts of identity bespeak not only actual or coveted socioeconomic status, but also domestic sociopolitical identification and, by extension, foreign policy orientation.

With specific reference to the dimensions of contemporary orthographic practice in Turkey, it is important to note that while contradictions between policy and practice have demanded that issues of language form and usage be officially revisited and modified over the course of the past seventy years, the Turkish alphabet has undergone no significant formal revisions since its adoption in 1928. As a result, orthography represented a new, and hence potent, site for identity politics when, beginning in the early 1990s, innovations in orthographic practice emerged, including the omission of diacriticals distinguishing the Turkish alphabet's "special characters" (*ç*, *ğ*, *ı*, *ö*, *ş*, and *ü*) from standard characters (*c*, *g*, *i*, *o*, *s*, and *u*), the omission of vowels altogether, the introduction of a variety of foreign letter combinations that due to the operant orthographic logic of a one-to-one relationship between phoneme and grapheme appear to violate Turkish morphological rules, the increasingly widespread popular use of three letters not found in the Turkish alphabet and not sanctioned by the TDK, and the use of loanletters to spell native Turkish words. Such orthographic innovations have become a new resource in the struggle over identity politics, with broader implications for the country's foreign policy orientation in the post-Cold War era, causing much consternation among language purists and social commentators and eventually sparking the animated online debate over the politics of orthography in Turkey addressed in the

next chapter. Before examining such orthographic innovations and their larger sociopolitical reverberations, however, it is important to contextualize them within a brief description of the ideological underpinnings of the interrelated histories of orthographic reform and language planning in Turkey.

THE POLITICS AND IDEOLOGY OF TURKISH ORTHOGRAPHIC REFORM

Despite being singularly ill-suited to represent Turkish phonology, the Arabo-Persian script--based on Arabic orthography but modified to include three letters representing sounds peculiar to Persian--was adopted by the Turks in conjunction with their conversion to Islam. Although the correlation between sound and symbol (i.e., phonology and orthography) is largely arbitrary in the sense that any set of characters can theoretically be applied to any language[78], the characters of the Arabo-Persian alphabet already possessed a representational value--i.e., an association with a particular sound--that was familiar to Turkish speakers from Arabic and Persian loanwords. Given this pre-established denotational relationship, the Arabo-Persian alphabet proved lacking in characters to represent Turkish where significant differences between Turkish and Arabic/Persian phonology were manifest. In his history of the Turkish language reform, Geoffrey Lewis describes the inherent dissonance between Turkish phonology and Arabo-Persian orthography as follows:

[78] That the relationship between sound and symbol is arbitrary becomes especially clear in the case of random characters taking the place of the "special characters" in the Turkish alphabet when font incompatibilities occur, as described below.

> Its intrinsic beauty aside, there is nothing to be said in favor of the Arabo-Persian alphabet as a medium for writing Turkish. All of its letters, including *alif*, the glottal stop, are consonants, some representing sounds not existing in Turkish and one, *k*, which may represent Turkish *g*, *k*, *n*, or *y*…. With the addition of diacritics above or below the letters, the three vowels *a*, *i*, and *u* can be indicated, whereas Turkish needs to distinguish eight… [As a result, many] equivocal readings were possible (Lewis 1999:27).

Similarly, scholar of the Turkish language reform, Uriel Heyd, writes:

> In the old Arabic script, he native Turkish words had almost looked like intruders into the language of a common Islamic, i.e. Arabic-Persian, civilization. Their orthography was difficult, inadequate and subject to frequent changes. On the other hand, the thousands of Arabic and Persian words had--owing to the religious and cultural prestige of their languages of origin--generally preserved their established spelling [thus arguably favoring their selection over native Turkish words, many of which they eventually replaced] (1954:23).

The incompatibility of the Arabo-Persian orthographic system with the Turkish language, particularly with regard to vowels, furthermore created ambiguities in comprehension that ultimately facilitated the adoption of an even greater number of Arabic and Persian loanwords. For example, the difficulty in distinguishing between two words differentiated solely by their constituent vowels--such as *olmak*, to be, and *ölmek*, to die--was avoided by using the compound *vefat etmek* from the Arabic *vefat,* meaning "death," in place of *ölmek*. In his entry on Turks in the13th edition of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, published in 1926, Sir Charles Eliot observed that the result of such orthography-derived ambiguity was "that pure Turkish words written in Arabic letters are

often hardly intelligible even to Turks and it is usual to employ Arabic synonyms as much as possible because there is no doubt as to how they should be read" (Eliot 1926, as quoted in Lewis 1999:28).

Given such difficulties, the advantages of changing the alphabet to better suit Turkish phonology were gradually recognized. In 1851, Western-educated bureaucrat and renowned reformer Ahmet Cevdet became the first to call publicly for modification of the Arabo-Persian alphabet. Just over a decade later, two concrete proposals for adapting the Arabo-Persian alphabet to better suit Turkish were submitted to the Ottoman Scientific Society by its founder, Antepli Münif Pasha. These were followed, the year after, by a proposal from Azerbaijani playwright Mirza Fethali Ahundzade. All three proposals were ultimately rejected by the Ottoman Scientific Society, and it was another half century before alphabet reform was again granted serious consideration. By then, however, the goals of reform had shifted and language professionals and members of the intelligentsia had begun advocating the adoption of a Latin-based alphabet--a solution that had later been championed by Ahundzade and was soon to be revived for consideration among the Turkic peoples of Central Asia and the Caucasus (Lewis 1999, Öztürk 1998, Şimşir 1992, Ülkütaşır 1991).

In briefly describing the axes of debate over these successive proposals, Lewis' concise history of the Turkish alphabet reform offers insight into contemporaneous linguistic ideologies which, in turn, suggest parallels with the ideological underpinnings of present-day debates over orthography. The justifications for repeated rejection of early proposals for alphabet reform from the mid 19th to early 20th century were both

philosophical and practical in nature, expressing concerns that forsaking or even modifying the sacred script of the Koran was tantamount to blasphemy and would render the holy book and other ancient Islamic texts inaccessible, creating a rupture with Islamic culture. Here it is interesting to note that this same ideological assumption linking orthographic affinity and cultural rapprochement ultimately informed Ataturk's decision to embrace orthographic reform as a means of reorienting the new Turkish republic away from the Islamic world and toward the West. Thus whereas contemporary cultural conservatives tend to view Ataturk's legacy with relation to orthography as the creation of a national symbol which must be protected from outside influence so as to ensure the well-being of the nation, progressives tend to focus on the "spirit" rather than the "letter" of Ataturk's orthographic reform, particularly the way in which it sought to modernize the Turkish nation, divorcing it from Islamic culture and orienting it toward the West. In this sense, orthography must be understood as indexical not only of domestic identity politics, but also of the broader struggle over national foreign policy orientation within contemporary Turkey, as it was in decades past.[79]

While the future of orthographic reform was still uncertain, however, the same ideological assumption was rallied against the proposed Latin-based alphabet by an earlier generation of purists who sought to protect the Ottoman language from

[79] I would also note the continued persistence of the fundamental ideological presupposition linking orthographic affinity and cultural rapprochement within contemporary Turkish society can be seen both in the effort to unify the Turkic peoples under the rubric of a Turkic world through the creation of a common Turkic alphabet, but also in the Turkic peoples' concerns, based on their experience under the Soviets, that adopting a foreign alphabet was tantamount to accepting a foreign culture.

contamination from Western letters, and, hence, Western culture. A good example of this can be found in the diatribe of General Kazim Karabekir, chairman of the 1923 Izmir Economic Congress, rejecting a motion calling for the Latin alphabet to be adopted. Warning of the sociopolitical dangers inherent to accepting a "foreign" alphabet, Karabekir vituperated that by adopting the Latin alphabet, "we shall at once have placed a splendid weapon in the hands of all Europe; they will declare to the Islamic world that the Turks have accepted the foreign writing and turned Christian. The diabolical idea with which our enemies are working is precisely this" (as quoted in Lewis 1999:32). The ideological undercurrents of Karabekir's tirade continue to resonate in contemporary debates over orthography, albeit in somewhat altered form. Where Karabekir equated acceptance of a foreign alphabet with Christianization, modern-day purist pundits see a loss of "Turkishness." Be it for religious or national reasons, the essential concern of participants to both debates revolves around the loss of identity believed to proceed from accommodating a foreign script.[80] Thus, in both cases, orthography is understood to stand metaphorically for the identity of the Turkish "self" in relation to the outside "other."

Furthermore, the ideological link posited between orthography and identity presages another theme manifest in the final line of Karabekir's diatribe which remains as current today as it was then--namely the belief that Europe is engaged in a long-standing conspiracy to discredit and weaken, convert and thus dominate Turkey. This suspicion of

[80] As noted in chapter three, this same concern was expressed by Turkic peoples in relation to adopting an *ortak alfabe* based on a foreign orthographic system.

European intentions has been a fundamental aspect of Turkish nationalism since the European powers attempted to divide Turkish territory amongst themselves in the aftermath of World War I, and remains particularly strong among socially conservative Turkish nationalists. Nowadays, it is the West in general, not just Europe, and America in particular, that is perceived to be working against Turkey's interest, and the concern is less over religious conversion--though this does crop up in discourse conflating the European Union with a "Christian club"--and more over Western imperialism and the homogenizing effects of globalization. Nonetheless, this mistrust of Western intentions persists and continues to inform discourse regarding contemporary linguistic issues.

In spite of such vehement objections to the Latin-based alphabet, reformism (*inkılapçılık*)--one of the six main principles of Kemalist thought--was the main currency of the early republican era, and it was only a matter of time before alphabet was to be subjected to its scrutiny. This moment came during the 20 May 1928 session of the Grand National Assembly when, after a law mandating the use of international numerals was approved, the question was raised as to whether the international letters might not also be adopted. Three days later, the Council of Ministers established the Language Commission (*Dil Encümeni*) to consider the mode and means of adapting the Latin orthography to the Turkish language. Issues of pronunciation were central to this process of representation, as members of the commission were well aware that orthography codifies, and by extension, determines pronunciation.

Thus, while it was felt that a phonemic alphabet, by mapping a one-to-one relationship between sound and symbol, speaking and writing, would best further the

goals of literacy, the commission deliberately shied away from adopting a transliterative script on the grounds that it would reinforce Arabic pronunciations. Not only would an alphabet which standardized Turkish pronunciations better reflect the speech patterns of the people, it would offer the additional advantage of rendering Arabic loanwords more noticeable--as the Arabic alphabet had done with Turkish words--and hence facilitating their eventual removal from the language. The Istanbul dialect was, as a result, chosen as the basis for the new alphabet.[81] As Lewis recounts:

> The longest discussions took place over the question of how to show the palatalized sounds of *k*, *g*, and *l* before back vowels. Before front vowels, as in *iki* 'two' and *gelmek* 'to come,' this happens automatically. Before back vowels there is no palatalization in native words but there is in Arabic and Persian borrowings…. The Commission's proposal in its report, published in early August, was to write an *h* after the consonant, as in Portuguese…. Another proposal was to use the *q* to show the sound of palatalized *k*. Many people preferred the latter alternative" (Lewis 1999:33).

Despite the support *q* received from some quarters, others were opposed to including it out of concern that it would ultimately prevent Arabic loanwords from being turkified. The addition of *q* was eventually rejected by Ataturk himself, who reportedly disliked the way it "looked" in the spelling of his name, although this ostensibly aesthetic

[81] The decision to base the Turkish alphabet on the Istanbul dialect was, and remains, controversial. One of the contentious points involved the letter *ğ* (*yumaşak g*, or soft g) which either lengthens the preceding vowel or, when occurring between two vowels, is not pronounced at all. Although this usage was in keeping with the Istanbul dialect, in other Turkish dialects it was pronounced as a voiced uvular fricative, thus approximating one of the sounds--*gh* ([ɣ])--represented in the Central Asian alphabets but largely lost from Turkish.

choice was likely ideologically driven, having to do with ensuring the Turkification of his Arabic-derived name. After a brief trial with the Portuguese *h*, it was decided to indicate palatalization by placing a circumflex over the ensuing back vowel in foreign loanwords (e.g., *kâtip*, "secretary" and *gâvur*, "infidel") which not only specified pronunciation but also marked such words as foreign. Thus, where Turkish words had once seemed foreign in the Arabo-Persian script, Arabic and Persian words now seemed foreign in the Latin script. Heyd notes: "Designed to render the sounds of the genuine Turkish speech material as correctly as possible, and based on the principle of a strictly phonetic spelling, the new alphabet turned Arabic and Persian words which had not been completely turkicized into distinctly foreign elements" (Heyd 1954:23).

This early controversy over the letter *q* is particularly fascinating in light of current debates over orthographic innovation that decry it as an agent of foreign influence, insofar as it suggests the arbitrary nature not only of orthography but also of purist ideology, which generally takes a, sociopolitically-driven, synchronic perspective in selecting the ideal which should be aspired to and protected. Although this principle may be more explicit vis-à-vis language, it nonetheless holds true with orthography as well. In other words, there is nothing about the letter *q*, which is the cause of such current consternation, that renders it explicitly incompatible with Turkish. Indeed, it is a well-accepted letter within the Latin-based orthographic system, which, had it been adopted in 1928, would now enjoy the protected status afforded the other letters of the Turkic alphabet. Since it was not, contemporary purists find it irrevocably foreign, even

though its rejection was on purely aesthetic grounds and the sound it represents continues to exist as a distinct phoneme in modern standard Turkish.

The new, Latin-based Turkish alphabet made its debut in August of 1928 and soon after was introduced to academics and literary figures, who briefly, but intensely debated its merits before unanimously adopting the proposal, with the announcement that:

> To deliver the nation from ignorance, the only course open is to abandon the Arabic letters, which are not suited to the national language, and to accept the Turkish letters, based on the Latin. The alphabet proposed by the Commission is in truth the Turkish alphabet; that is definite…The laws of grammar and spelling will evolve in step with the improvement and development of the language and with the national taste" (as quoted in Lewis 1999:32).

Thus a natural, almost primordial, link between the Turkish language and its "true" new alphabet was established which served to stifle the clear diversity of opinion, forestall further debate, and render the alphabet--now enshrined by Kemalism and Turkish nationalism as opposed to Islam--all but immutable. What minor adjustments were proposed--mostly associated with foreign loanwords and involving special characters (e.g., hyphens, apostrophes, etc.) as well as the pesky palatalization conundrum--were mostly rejected on the basis of Ataturk's verdict, often cited by purists as the inspiration behind their current efforts to protect the Turkish languages, that it was not "proper to add letters to the Turkish alphabet for the sake of foreign words which have infiltrated into our language and the elimination of which is (merely) a question of

time" (as quoted in Heyd 1954:24, citing Maksudi 1930:275). And, thus, but for slight adjustments,[82] the Turkish alphabet has remained unchanged to the present day.

Figure 5.1 Famed photograph of Atatürk teaching the Latin alphabet to Turkish citizens[83]

After being officially adopted, the new alphabet was formalized and quickly implemented. By October 1928, all public officials had been examined for competence in the Latin-based script, and a week later, the Grand National Assembly enacted Law

[82] One such adjustment was the TDK's decision in 1977 to eliminate diacritical marks made. This was popularly adopted and remains largely in force despite the fact that the TDK reversed their decision a decade later in 1988 (Lewis 1999).

[83] Please see: http://www.allaboutturkey.com/reform.htm, last accessed August 2, 2011.

No. 1353, "On the Adoption and Application of the New Turkish Letters." The speed with which the reforms were accomplished was indicative of Ataturk's determination to avoid unnecessary wrangling over the new orthography either among members of the Grand National Assembly or the society at large. While arguably critical to its successful implementation, however, such haste also undoubtedly contributed to the canonization of certain imperfections which have been the source of much subsequent discontent among linguists, literary figures, and other language professionals. Some of the most controversial imperfections represent discrepancies between the underlying ideologies of orthographic reform and the actual form of the Turkish alphabet, particularly the lack of strict adherence to the principle of a one-to-one relationship between sound and symbol, and include the omission of letters representing sounds still found in the Turkic languages and dialects of Turkey, such as the letter *q* (/q/), as well as the inclusion of letters associated with sounds found only in foreign loanwords, such as the letter *j* (/ʒ/).

Such critiques of the Turkish alphabet reform persisted even after sixty years, and were reanimated in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union, when increased contact with the languages of the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples reminded linguists and language professionals of the phonological richness still extant in the regional dialects of Turkey and in the Turkic languages, but lost from modern standard Turkish as the result of inadequate orthographic representation. In a 25 November 2001 editorial for *Zaman* newspaper entitled "The Lost Sounds of Turkish" ("*Türkçe'nin Kaybolan Sesleri"*), columnist Beşir Ayvazoğlu speaks of the harm done to the Turkish language by its imperfect script, bemoaning the omission of letters from the Turkish alphabet and

resulting impoverishment of the once harmonious language itself and rejoicing that Turkey's ex-Soviet Turkic "brothers," and particularly its Azerbaijani neighbors, whose language closely resembles some of Turkey's regional dialects, had avoided falling victim to the same catastrophic by retaining sufficient characters in their new alphabet to represent the distinctive quality of their spoken language. He writes:

> Çok kısa bir sürede hazırlanan ve kabul edilen modern Türk alfabesi, zamanla Türkçedeki bütün sesleri eksiksiz karşılayacak hale getirilmesi gerekirken mevcut şekliyle dokunulmazlık zırhına büründürülmüş ve bu yüzden birçok ses yok olmuştur. […]
>
> Yeni alfabe, dilimizdeki Arapça ve Farsça asıllı kelimelerin imlâsında büyük sıkıntılar yarattığı gibi, aslî seslerimizi de tam karşılamıyordu. Mesela, el'i él'den, geç'i géç'ten ayırmamızı sağlayacak kapalı e unutulmuş veya gözden çıkarılmıştı. Aynı şekilde Türkçenin güzel ve zengin seslerinden biri olan deñiz, diñlemek, añlamak gibi kelimelerdeki genizden gelen ñ sesini karşılayacak bir harf de düşünülmemiştir. […]
>
> Lâtin alfabesine geçen Türk cumhuriyetleri bizim hatalarımızı tekrarlamadılar. Mesela, Azeriler yirmi dokuz harfli alfabemizi olduğu gibi kabul etselerdi, yirmi-otuz yıl sonra, Azeri Türkçesi, kulağımıza musiki gibi gelen o güzel sesleri kaybederek Türkiye

> Whereas the modern Turkish alphabet, which was prepared and adopted in a very short period of time, should in time have been brought to a state whereby all the sounds of Turkish would be represented without exception, it was wrapped in the armor of inviolability in its existing state and for this reason a good number of sounds disappeared. […]
>
> Just as words in our language derived from Arabic and French created big problems for orthography, the new alphabet, is also not able to fully represent our fundamental sounds. For example, the closed e which would ensure our distinguishing between el and él, geç and géç seems to have been forgotten or removed from sight. In the same way, a letter to represent one of Turkish's most beautiful and rich sounds the nasal ň in such words as deňiz, diňlemek, anlamak seems to not have been thought of. […]
>
> The Turkic republics that are switching to the Latin alphabet did

Türkçesinin yaşadığı trajik akıbeti yaşardı. Eski Istanbulluların konuştuğu Türkçenin Fransızca gibi son derece âhenkli bir dil olduğunu ayrıca belirtmeye gerek var mı? […]

Bugünkü Türkçe, tarih içinde kazandığı bütün incelikleri ve ses zenginliklerini geride bırakmıştır. Artık konuştuğumuz Halid Ziya'ların, Hamdullah Suphi'lerin âhenkli Türkçesi değil, ağzımızda geveleyip kekelediğimiz kakofonik bir Türkçedir. Maalesef!

not repeat our mistakes. For example, if the Azeris had adopted our 29-letter alphabet as is, 20-30 years later, Azeri Turkish, having lost those beautiful sounds that seem like music to our ears, would have experienced the tragic outcome that Turkey Turkish experienced. Is there any need to further state that the Turkish spoken by old Istanbulites is, like French, an exceedingly harmonious language? […]

No longer is what we speak the harmonious Turkish of Halid Ziya and Hamdullah Suphi, it is a cacophonous Turkish that we mumble and stammer in our mouths. Unfortunately!

Deficiencies such as those described by Ayvazoğlu notwithstanding, Lewis judges the Latin alphabet to be "undeniably the best that has ever been used for Turkish," and suggests that it "has played a large part in the rise of literacy; according to the official figures, from 9 per cent in 1924 to 65 per cent in 1975 and 82.5 per cent in 1995" (1999:37). Given the inherent link between language and alphabet, orthographic reform furthermore set the stage for subsequent reform of the Turkish language in keeping with the nationalizing objectives of the Kemalist government. As remarked by Heyd: "The lengthy discussions on the subject of a new script had aroused wide public interest in linguistic problems generally; its adoption prepared the people psychologically for fundamental changes in the language itself. Such changes now seemed both natural and imperative" (1954:23).

Yet, while the necessity of language reform may have gained currency, the form it should take was not nearly as apparent. Unlike alphabet, the parameters of which are relatively circumscribed, language, with a near-infinite performative range, proved more difficult to reform, and reform efforts more given to disagreement. Thus, whereas alphabet has remained relatively untouched since its adoption, language has been subjected to successive waves of reform over the course of the past eighty years. In this sense, although Turkish language reform is clearly a topic unto itself, the intrinsic relationship between orthography and language links the two reforms in complex ways--for even at the most basic level, loanletters follow from loanwords in much the same way that technical terms accompany technological advances, although both are very likely to take on lives of their own soon after arrival. As such, the following section will address some key points related to language reform that have bearing not only on contemporary innovations in orthographic practice but also on the metalinguistic discourses that emerge within the debate, addressed in the following chapter, over the relative value of restricting versus expanding the Turkish alphabet.

THE POLITICS AND IDEOLOGY OF TURKISH LANGUAGE REFORM

Conversion to Islam brought not just the Arabo-Persian script to the Turkish language, but also many elements of the Arabic and Persian languages, both lexical and grammatical. The result was the Ottoman language--a linguistic amalgamation of Turkish, Persian, and Arabic which was so far removed from the language of the Turkish

"folk" as to be practically unintelligible. As the language of the Ottoman elite, Ottoman served as both the bureaucratic language of the state and the medium of culture, art, and literature. For centuries its primacy went unquestioned until the accelerated decline of the Ottoman Empire coupled with the increasing influence of Western civilization during the nineteenth century, propelled language reform into the spotlight. During the Tanzimat period, lasting from 1839 to 1876, efforts to revitalize the empire brought about reorganization of the Ottoman administrative, legal and educational systems and the emergence of a Westernized middle class which, roused by nationalist sentiment, led calls for reform of the Ottoman language, deemed incompatible with the needs of the newly organized empire.

Although some progress was made toward simplifying and purifying the language, it was not until after the Young Turk revolution of 1908/9 that a group of young nationalists writing for the periodical *Genç Kalemler* (Young Pens) formulated a concerted program of linguistic reform aimed at creating a new language (*yeni lisan*) free from Arabic and Persian grammatical elements and redundant lexical borrowings (Heyd 1954). Thus, as with alphabet, debate about language reform preceded by many years the birth of the Turkish Republic and the establishment almost a decade later of the organization tasked with carrying out reform of the Turkish language. Numerous histories of the Turkish language reform offer in-depth treatment of these early discourses (Lewis 1999, Heyd 1954, Baydur 1952), but for present purposes, it will suffice to note the rough dimensions of debate as they informed republican-era language reform efforts.

On the one side were those who condemned language reform in much the same terms as earlier critics denounced alphabet reform, fearing that it would render the Koran and other Islamic works less accessible, thereby divorcing Turkish society from the Islamic world. These detractors were joined by those loathe to eliminate the Arabic and Persian elements from the Ottoman language out of concern that it would reduce the language to the barbarity of other Turkic languages[84] and eliminate the higher social status afforded Ottoman speakers over the common Turkish folk (Lewis 1999). On the other side were those who supported reforming the language but were divided in their opinions as to method. This latter group was divided into three separate factions each with divergent aims: (1) the simplifiers (*sadeleştirmeciler*), who aimed to replace foreign loanwords with Turkish equivalents; (2) the turkicizers (*türkçeciler*), who favored retaining popularly assimilated Arabic and Persian borrowings while creating Turkish neologisms from Turkish suffixes to replace unassimilated loanwords; and (3) the purifiers (*tasfiyeciler*), who advocated adopting words and suffixes from other Turkic dialects and inventing neologisms where necessary (Lewis 1999). The fundamental difference between these three factions thus lay in divergent notions of what constituted legitimate native sources for enriching the language once it had been purged of unacceptable foreign loanwords, and the struggle between them was a contest over the authority not only to make determinations about language purity (Schiffman 1999), but also to thereby define the nature of essential "self" and foreign "other" and, in so doing,

[84] Note here that contrasting assessments of the Turkic languages as "barbarous" or the essence of "purity" from the early twentieth century are echoed in contemporary assessments, as discussed in the previous chapter.

shape, through linguistic affiliation and differentiation, the national character of the Turkish republic and its relations to other nations.

In 1932, when Ataturk founded the *Türk Dili Tetkik Cemiyeti* (Turkish Society for the Study of Language), which later became the *Türk Dil Kurumu* (Turkish Language Society), the purifiers prevailed to the enduring detriment, in most contemporary scholars' view, of the overall language reform effort.[85] With the full authority of the TDK, the purifiers, who, in keeping with their commitment to language purity, had dropped their Arabic moniker (*tasfiyeciler*) in favor of the Turkish *özleştirmeciler*, soon set about purging foreign loanwords and creating *öztürkçe* (pure Turkish) alternatives. The problem was, as many critics charged at the time, the work was far from scientific and the results far from "pure." Many Arabic and Persian loanwords that were well assimilated at all strata of Turkish society were eliminated despite a failure to coin acceptable substitutes, while others were replaced with alternatives often created on the basis of spurious linguistic principles (Hony 1947). Thus, for example, a romantic preoccupation with the "purity" of the Turkic languages of Central Asia, led the purifiers to adopt Turkic roots or suffixes that were then paired with Arabic suffixes and roots, resulting in hybrid forms that clearly stretched the definition of purity.

Such policies invited critique, even ridicule, for their lack of scientific rigor, for the oddly-contrived constructions produced, and for being politically motivated. Opponents protested that the TDK was degrading the expressiveness of the language by

[85] Even contemporary purists who agree with the linguistic ideology of their predecessors, have critiqued them for their methods which, by so discrediting the TDK, has made the job of subsequent purist reformers all the more difficult.

removing loanwords without providing substitutes and offering a single neologism to stand in the place of the full range of nuance expressed by multiple borrowings, all under the guise of eliminating "redundancy" (Hony 1947). Nonetheless, it should be noted, that many of the neologisms created by the TDK and funneled into the schools were widely adopted and have successfully supplanted their foreign counterparts in contemporary Turkish. By the 1940s, however, criticism of the TDK's reform efforts had become so vociferous that the society made some effort to assuage opponents of purging commonly-used Arabic and Persian borrowings by suggesting that those which conformed to Turkish linguistic rules might be retained. By that time, however, much of the damage had been done. At the same time, the Turkish language was coming under increasing pressure from new borrowings from a different source--the West. Much as close relations with Islamic culture had spawned the adoption of Arabic and Persian loanwords, increasing contact with Western civilization had introduced a panoply of borrowings from Western languages, particularly in the realm of technical terms. With the introduction of Western loanwords, the already extant divide in the linguistic marketplace between those who embraced and those who eschewed foreign loanwords was to become even more complicated, as it added another layer of foreign lexical resources with entirely different indexical meaning.

While initial efforts were made to turkicize these new loanwords, by 1949 the TDK had recognized the futility of staunching the influx of international borrowings and, seeking simply to control it, begrudgingly set forth parameters for admitting technical loanwords, declaring: "Foreign-language scientific and technical terms used in common

by the advanced nations may be taken into our language in accordance with a specific method which will be studied and accepted" (as quoted in Lewis 1999:154). This pragmatic adjustment to allow for foreign scientific terms--a not uncommon domain for slippage toward lexical internationalization in purity movements throughout the world (Fishman 2006)--once again redefined the parameters of Turkish linguistic purity along the sliding scale toward vernacularity, although it is important to note that among its advocates, the ideology of purism remained unchanged. Here, then, we see the greater importance of attitude over practice (Annamalai 1979) in the persistence of purist ideology. Nonetheless, such concessions proved too little too late for opponents to purism and the fortunes of the TDK took a dramatic downturn soon thereafter. Accusations that the TDK was forwarding political rather than scientific aims reached a fevered pitch, and as political power shifted hands in elections and coups, leading to reversals and restorations of its policies in subsequent decades, the power of the TDK waned. Although reconstituted under the *Atatürk Kültür, Dil, ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu* (Ataturk High Commission on Culture, Language, and History) by a 1983 law, the TDK has never fully regained its former strength and influence.

SOCIOLINGUISTIC PRACTICE AND THE POLITICS OF IDENTITY

As a direct result of Turkey's checkered history of linguistic reform, the politicization of linguistic policies has long been echoed in the linguistic practices of individual speakers. Paradoxically, in the name of purifying the language by replacing

foreign loanwords with Turkish neologisms, reformers ultimately supplied Turkish speakers with lexical variants possessing innate sociopolitical associations that stood in stark contrast to those of preexisting alternatives, hence allowing these synonyms to be coopted by opposing groups as a symbolic resource in the struggle over identity politics.

Linguistic choice thus became a deliberate act of personal identity and even political affiliation--use of Ottomanisms being seen as a mark of conservatism/ reactionaryism, while use of *öztürkçe* neologisms were viewed as a mark of progressivism/ reformism. During my years conducting fieldwork in Turkey, I personally was confronted by the enduring politics of linguistic choice. Speaking Turkish well but lacking the full expressive range of a native speaker, I tended to inadvertently privilege one of several synonyms with which I was familiar, often solely on the basis of having learned it first and hence ingrained it more deeply. There were, however, not infrequent occasions when this entirely unintentional preference stood me in poor stead until I came to understand that the respective lexicons of the young nationalists I worked with and my liberal academic colleagues were quite divergent, and my use of, for example, *millet* versus *ulus* (both meaning "nation") provided immediate cause for suspecting my political allegiance. Lamenting this state of affairs in the introduction to his 1981 memoirs, diplomat Zeki Kuneralp wrote:

> [L]anguage has no party or religion. Revolutionaries and conservatives may use the same language…. Language is a means, not an end; it does not take sides. We generally fail to realize this. For example, if we are fanatical partisans of pure Turkish, when we cannot find a pure Turkish word to express the meaning we

> want, we load that meaning on to some other word and, for the sake of our socio-political beliefs, cast aside the Arabic, Persian, or Western word that perfectly meets our needs. In this way, we impoverish our language, we obliterate its nuances, we deprive it of clarity and thrust it into a tasteless form (as quoted and translated in Lewis 1999:152).

The process by which sociopolitical meaning is conferred on linguistic variants is further illustrated in the case of a highly-regarded U.S.-based Turkish writer and translator who writes in English. After being contracted by a Turkish publishing house to translate her own work into Turkish and submitting the completed manuscript, she received a letter from the publisher declining to publish it out of concern that, despite the progressive nature of the story which had first attracted their attention, her older lexical choices, which eschewed Turkish neologisms in favor of a more nuanced Ottoman vocabulary, might come across not simply as old-fashioned, but as politically reactionary, even fundamentalist, and the book would hence fail to attract the proper readership. For this writer, who had lived in the U.S. since the 1950s and was therefore absent from Turkey during much of the linguistic controversies of the intervening decades, employing the nuanced language of her youth in her translation was an aesthetic not a political choice, but it was nonetheless interpreted as the latter by her would-be publisher.[86]

An additional consequence of the politicization of linguistic choice has been the accelerated pace with which Western loanwords have been adopted into Turkish, joining the panoply of "Turkish" choices as resources for marking personal identity and status. Given the extent to which lexical choice was imbued with political meaning, one option

[86] Personal interview with the writer December 2002.

for avoiding censure was to seek out political neutrality in foreign loanwords. However, as Western borrowings were eagerly adopted not simply to replace Arabic/Persian loanwords and Turkish neologisms or to express new concepts, but rather to substitute for standard Turkish equivalents, they lost what neutrality they may have once possessed and became status and identity markers indicative of a modern, Westernized, educated, and, most importantly, politically progressive outlook. Successive waves of loanwords furthermore resulted in an apparent hierarchy related to the international standing of the language from which they were borrowed--a phenomenon that Cevdet Kudret addresses in a 1966 book entitled *There are Languages not Resembling Ours*. Noting the substitution of French not just for Arabic but also Greek and Italian loanwords, he writes:

> Nor did it stop there; we have changed European words that entered earlier also, taking other European words to replace them. Now we say *müzik* instead of *musiki*, *restoran* instead of *lokanta*, *ajans* instead of *acente*, *fuar* instead of *panayır*…If you look into it you will see that the Turkish word *aşevi* is used of the commonest and cheapest eating houses. As *lokanta* began to spread gradually among the populace too, the top stratum sought for themselves yet another way of saying it and found *restoran*. *Aşevi* is the eating place of the populace, *lokanta* of the middle class, *restoran* of the upper class. Thus the further we distance ourselves from the populace, the further our language departs from Turkish. The more we adopt European language, the more refined we think we are becoming. In that connection: the populace goes to the *ayakyolu* and the *apteşhane*, and the middle class goes to the *helâ*, whereas we educated folk go to the *tuvalet*; moreover the *WC* has recently turned up, and now and again we go there as well (Kudret 1966:74-5, as quoted and translated in Lewis 1999:134).

In response to such trends, the Turkish Language Society embarked on a campaign in the 1970s designed to "rescue" and "restore" the Turkish language by

developing and publicizing Turkish language equivalents for Western loanwords (*yabancı kelimelere karşılıklar*). Rampant criticism of the Society's role in weakening the Turkish language with its earlier, oft misguided, program to purify the language through the substitution of Turkish neologisms for Arabic and Persian borrowings had, however, compromised its credibility, and its efforts to counter foreign language influence from the West thus met with little success. As a result, the influence of Western languages, particularly English as it overtook French as the global *lingua franca*, was to become ever more pronounced in subsequent decades.

The progressive deepening of this trend was particularly evident in the linguistic practices of Westernized, politically progressive, urban Turks, many of whom had been educated overseas or graduated from English-language schools and universities in Turkey. By the mid 1990s, during my first fieldwork trips to Turkey, my academic colleagues at the Middle East Technical University (*Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi*) and Bosphorous University (*Boğaziçi Üniversitesi*)--two of Turkey's oldest and most respected English-language universities--routinely peppered their speech with English borrowings (e.g., "OK, *hadi* bye-bye," in place of the standard "*Tamam, hadi görüşürüz*") and attached Turkish suffixes to English words (e.g., "*okeylemek*" for "to okay") or created English-Turkish compounds (e.g., "*aprüv etmek*" for "to approve") in a hybridized discursive style they laughingly dubbed "Turklish." Despite ironically chiding themselves when confronted with my native English/non-native Turkish speaker's studied avoidance of such constructions, it was nonetheless clear that they in fact embraced this obvious indication of their facility in English and conversance with

Western scholarly traditions. Here, Fishman's description of vernacularity as the casual or informal style of speakers who "place much higher value on folksiness and trendiness than on formality and purity" (2006:34) seems to fit perfectly.

While for such speakers the deliberate and frequent use of English loanwords had become a normalized practice, others were not so sanguine about the effects of English on their speech patterns and inveighed at length against the use of English as the language of instruction at the top-notch public and private universities in Turkey where they studied. Among this second group, my studied avoidance of English loanwords and hybridized "Turklish" expressions was better appreciated, as it mirrored their own linguistic practices. Their careful adherence to the principles of linguistic purity when speaking their native language was also mirrored in their metalinguistic discourse. Arguing that learning in a non-native language placed an unnecessary burden on students and compromised the quality of education by preventing both teachers and students from being able to fully express themselves as they could in Turkish, these disgruntled students located their concerns within a larger ideological discourse of post-colonial theory by suggesting that the inability to fully articulate and develop ideas, in turn, hindered the development of scientific research and other academic endeavors in Turkey, consigning Turkish scholars to forever playing second fiddle in the global market of ideas.

Renowned poet and writer Bülent Yavuz Bakiler expresses a similar perspective on the use of foreign languages as the language of instruction in Turkish high schools and universities in an interview entitled "Our Alphabet Between Two Q's" published in *Yeni*

Şafak newspaper on 25 November 2001. Under the subsection entitled "National Education Makes Us 'Deficient,'" the article reads:

> Ana okullardan üniversitelere kadar yayilan yabanci dille egitimin Türk aydinlarini Ingilizler gibi düsünmeye ittigini ifade eden Bakiler, "Türkiye'yi bunlar yakinda bir sömürge devleti haline getirmek istiyorlar" dedi. […]
>
> "Edebiyatimizin ve ilim dilimizin batidan geride olmasinin nedeni Türkçe'deki tasfiye harekatidir. ABD'de ve Ingiltere'de ilk egitimden geçen çocuklarin kitaplarindaki kelime sayisi 71 bin iken, Türkiye'de ise bu sayi sadece 7 bindir. Sonuçta müthis bir gerilik çikiyor."
>
> Bakiler, who states that education in foreign languages which is spreading from primary schools to universities is pushing Turkish intellectuals toward thinking like Englishmen, said: "They want to bring Turkey in the near term to the state of being a colony state." […]
>
> The reason for our literature and our science being behind western languages is the maneuver toward the purification of Turkish. If there are 71 thousand total words in the books of children passing from primary education in England and the USA, in Turkey this count is only 7 thousand. As a result, a terrible backwardness emerges.

Such arguments in turn resonate with justifications given by the TDK for their initial efforts in the early 1940s to stem the tide of foreign scientific terminology into Turkish, before ultimately conceding the point on pragmatic grounds, as summed up in the following declaration: "Indeed it is our belief that scientific terms become our own in so far as they are based on the pure language. So long as they remain foreign, science in Turkey cannot escape being on loan from other people" (as quoted in Lewis 1999:153). Expressed in idioms of cultural imperialism and anti-Westernism, these interrelated anxieties of linguistic purists over the effects on independent, creative thought of

instruction in foreign languages or use of foreign scientific terms tie foreign language influence to broader political concerns over Turkey's increasing integration with the West and the hegemonic pressures inherent to globalization in the post-Cold War era.

Such divergent attitudes toward foreign language influence in Turkey--enthusiastic acceptance on the one hand and bitter rejection on the other--represent the ideological extremes of purism and vernacularity held respectively by conservative and progressive factions within the Turkish elite, and thus the country's fractured linguistic marketplace. Much to the consternation of linguistic conservatives, however, the influence of foreign languages, particularly English, has grown beyond the progressive elite, making rapid inroads among those who seek to emulate them as well as within the general population, which remains largely unaware of and unconcerned by the foreign origin of new words and hence views them neither as status markers indexing a familiarity with Western culture nor as harbingers of Western imperialism. This state of affairs was driven home to me one day in an interaction at the grocery store near my home in Ankara. While picking up some shampoo, I was flagged down by a fellow shopper, a middle-aged Turkish woman in conservative dress, who, clearly having mistaken me for a Turk, asked me if I knew where to find *badivaş*. Not recognizing what I assumed to be an unfamiliar Turkish word, I asked her to repeat it, which she did accompanied by a slight gesture of rubbing her forearm. "*Badivaş*," it suddenly struck me, might be "body wash," but still unsure that I had interpreted her correctly, I asked "*Vücüt şampuanı mı arıyorsunuz*?" ("Is it body shampoo you're looking for?" "*Hayır, badivaş. Badivaş*," she replied ("No, 'badivash.' 'Badivash'"). Now questioning my

interpretation, but unable to think of any alternative, I asked: "*Nerede kullanıyorsunuz? Banyo için mi?*" ("Where do you use it? Is it for the shower?) in an inelegant effort to determine the use of the product she was seeking. "*Evet*," ("Yes") she replied. "OK, body wash," I said. "*Evet, badivaş*," ("Yes, 'badivash'") she replied. I duly scanned the shelves, located the body wash, labeled "*vücüt şampuanı*" in Turkish, and pointed it out to her. "*Vücüt şampuanı, bu*," ("This is body shampoo") she said, clearly disappointed. "*Evet, aynı şey*," I replied, "*badivaş, vücüt şampuanının İngilizcesi*" ("Yes, it's the same thing; body wash is the English for body shampoo). "*Hahhhh*," she said, thanked me profusely, grabbed the body wash, and proceeded to the check-out line, leaving me to consider that not only did she identify the product she was seeking by its English, rather than Turkish, name, but that she seemed to have no idea that "*badivaş*" was not a Turkish neologism, and hence did not recognize "*vücüt şampuanı*"[87] as the Turkish equivalent.

This increasingly widespread unwitting, and hence unmarked, use of English loanwords within the general populace is of obvious concern to those who take the conservative position of condemning foreign language influence, who in an appeal to Turkish patriotism, have oft beseeched their progressive foes, seen as sanguine about or indifferent to the issue, to support efforts to defend the Turkish language from mounting incursions by Western loanwords. Thus, for example, in a 1992 academic panel celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Turkish language reform, advocates of linguistic purism addressed the "danger from the West" ("*Batı'dan gelen tehlike*") posed by foreign

[87] Of course it should be noted that the compound construction "*vücüt şampuanı*" is also composed of two loanwords: *vücüt*, from the Arabic, and *şampuan*, turkified from the English "shampoo."

language influence and stressed the need for intellectuals to transcend the traditional "progressive-reactionary divide" ("*ilerici-gerici ayrımı*") and unite in fighting the "assault" ("*saldırı*") of Turkish by Western languages.[88] Their appeal appears to have gone unheeded, however, and the influx of foreign loanwords continues apace.

PURITY AND POLLUTION: LINGUISTIC LIBERALISM AND THE PURIST RESPONSE

In contrast to the widespread propensity among human societies to reject linguistic borrowing,[89] Turkish society has been relatively open to foreign language influence--its citizens easily, often eagerly, adopting foreign loanwords, though individual speakers may eschew them. This openness to linguistic pluralism can perhaps be explained, at least in part, by a receptiveness to change engendered through a long linguistic history characterized by the rampant adoption of Arabic and Persian loanwords during the Ottoman era and by subsequent republican-era linguistic reforms that introduced TDK-fabricated neologisms to replace them. Paradoxically, then, although linguistic pluralism is clearly a long-standing trend within Turkish society, the unintended impact of a legacy of linguistic reform that sought to return the language to a pure, and therefore largely static, state was to reinforce vernacularity or "linguistic

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[88] An account (synopsis) of the conference that appeared in the 29 September 1992 issue of *Cumhuriyet* newspaper reported that panel participants "stressed the need for all intellectuals to work together against the invasion of Western languages without regard for the progressive-reactionary division" ("*Batı dillerinin istilasına karşı ilerici-gerici ayrımı yapılmadan tüm aydınların birlikte çalışması gerektiğini vurguladılar*").

[89] Sherzer (1976) and others have labeled this propensity "linguistic conservatism."

liberalism" by effectively eradicating any lingering sense among the general populace that language was fixed and inviolate.

Furthermore, since notions of linguistic purity inevitably hearken back to the simulacra of a largely static primordial Turkish language (the *öz* in *öztürkçe* having the same connotation as the *ur* in *Ursprache*), linguistic policies pursued by the state aimed at purifying (*özleştirmek)* the language and freeing it from foreign influence have, in the process, eliminated much of its lexical range and expressiveness, requiring speakers seek it out from other sources (Gün 1986). As a result, the existence of significant resistance to top-down language management among the progressive intellectual elite as well as within popular culture is not surprising. Thus, while **s**tate-sponsored linguistic reformers sought to eliminate diglossia by replacing the "high" variant (Ottoman) with the "low" variant (the Turkish of the "folk," known to the Ottomans as *kaba Türkçe*), progressive elite speakers, in an attempt to satisfy the urge both for linguistic expressiveness and social indexing through language, have reintroduced an unusual form of "vernacular" diglossia by creating an informal "high" variant of standard Turkish out of plundered foreign loanwords.

In response to such trends, the reconstituted Turkish Language Society revived its efforts in 1994 to reverse the influx of Western loanwords by establishing a commission to discuss and select Turkish language equivalents from a list of proposed alternatives and to publicize the results. Each month, a list of these agreed-upon equivalents were included in the TDK's monthly language and literature journal, *Türk Dili* (Turkish Language), and in 1995, a compendium was published under the title *Yabancı Kelimelere*

Karşılıklar (Foreign Word Equivalents) (Lewis 1999). This new initiative was launched with an announcement in the journal *Türk Dili*, which mixed epidemiological and dramaturgical idioms to describe how foreign loanwords were like a contagion "infecting" (*sirayet etmek*) the Turkish language at such a rate that "not a day passes without some new Western word… making a spectacle of itself" *([g]ün geçmiyor ki batının yeni bir kelimesi ...arziendam etmesin*) (*Türk Dili* 507:218-221). Here, the metaphorical "profession" Thomas (1991) describes of the purist as "physican," eliminating the contagion that, not content with afflicting a single once-healthy host, seeks to progressively ravage others until felling the entire community, is recalled. The "slippery slope" fallacy of a single new Western loanword bringing down the entire Turkish nation is palpably manifest.

Furthermore, the choice of the archaic Persian loanword construction, *arziendam etmek,* in place of the modern Turkish, *boy göstermek*, in the announcement seems designed to unequivocally demonstrate that the TDK has abandoned its much-condemned efforts to eliminate Arabic and Persian borrowings, and is instead embracing their expressiveness, thereby divorcing its current battle against the incursion of Western loanwords from its controversial earlier policies. In this sense, the wording of the announcement cleverly implies a dichotomy in which Arabic and Persian linguistic influence, in contrast to that from Western languages, is recast as acceptable. This, in turn, is reflective of a new approach to linguistic purism, often articulated to me by linguistic conservatives, that reevaluates well-integrated Arabic and Persian borrowings on that basis that the Islamic culture of their speakers renders them more "organic" to the

Turkish language than Western loanwords. This revised ideology of linguistic purism--in which elements of vernacularity are tolerated, even embraced, as long as they fall into an acceptable range, as defined by contemporary sociopolitical considerations, within the sliding scale between strict purism and unabashed vernacularity--is thus characteristic of Woolard and Schieffelin's description of purism as seeking to "close off non-native sources of innovation, but usually selectively, targeting only languages construed as threats" (1994:64).

That the TDK has adopted a new orientation toward linguistic purification and turkification is likewise manifest in the lists of foreign loanword equivalents prepared by the institution in which numerous Arabic and Persian borrowings into Ottoman are offered as acceptable "Turkish" substitutions for Western loanwords, as well as in my own observations of the use of such earlier borrowings in the speech of top TDK officials I interviewed and whose public lectures I attended. Such reimagination of linguistic affinity reflects a larger sociopolitical shift in which developments on the linguistic front echo a new nationalist focus among cultural conservatives on the Ottomans' success in assimilating the linguistic and cultural diversity of the multiethnic empire, which is nonetheless laced with an underlying concern over the current threat of Turkey's own assimilation by the West.

In addition to recommending foreign loanword equivalents, both calques and neologisms, the TDK also takes pains to model them in its publications and on its website, thereby educating the populace in their use. For example, in an article posted on the society's website which describes the advent of the internet and its current use in

Turkey, head of the TDK, Şükrü Halûk Akalın, introduces a number of newly-minted equivalents for foreign internet-related terms by using them in the text of the article followed by the English loanword they replace in parentheses, to wit: *ağ* (web), *sanal* (virtual), *çevirge* (modem), *sunucu* (server), *e-posta* (elektronik posta, e-mail), *ağ kümeleri* (web sites), *Dosya Aktarım Protokolü* (FTP - File Transfer Protocol), *Evrensel Kaynak Belirleyicileri* (URL - Universal Resource Locators), and *İletim Denetleme Protokolü/İnternet Protokolü* (Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol, or TCP/IP).[90] These neologisms have, however, met with mixed success in replacing their English equivalents, tending to be adopted exclusively by supporters of the TDK and partisans of linguistic purism.

Furthermore, in 1997, the Turkish Language Society took steps to bring its campaign against Western loanwords to a broader audience, producing a poster for distribution to schools throughout the country which depicted a crowded city street lined by small businesses, each of which was advertised in a foreign language, overwhelmingly English: *Chicken House*, *Photo Color*, *Real Estate Center*, *La Famme Boutique*, and simply *Hotel*. Is this Turkey? ("*Burası Türkiye mi*?"), the poster asks.[91] Two years later, when I arrived at the Turkish Language Society for my first interview with its director, the 1997 poster was still displayed inside the glass fronted placard by the street on the walkway to the building's entrance--the sole remnant of and sad testament to an

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[90] See the following webpage on the Türk Dil Kurumu's website: http://www.tdk.gov.tr/TR/Genel/BelgeGoster.aspx?F6E10F8892433CFFAAF6AA849816B2EF7046799E749A6E99, last accessed August 2, 2011.

[91] See also Lewis' description of the same poster (1999:134).

apparently abrogated effort--yet I was unable to obtain a satisfactory answer for why the effort had not been further pursued.

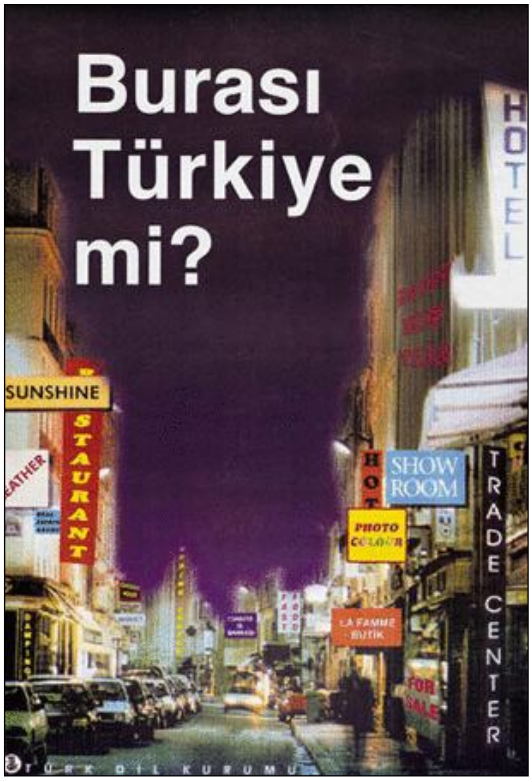

Figure 5.2 "Is this Turkey?" poster prepared by the Turkish Language Society[92]

From a political economy of language perspective, it is important to note that insofar as the TDK found it necessary to place posters in the schools in an effort to promulgate its policies where, in earlier decades, the direct influence its policies had on scholastic curriculum via the Ministry of Education would have sufficed, educational

[92] Please see: http://www.yorumla.net/gereksiz-mesajlar/212559-burasi-turkiye-mi.html, last accessed August 2, 2011.

institutions in Turkey can no longer be said to serve as handmaidens to state-sponsored linguistic policy.[93] Indeed, there have been several indications that the TDK's decline had prompted the Ministry of Education to chart its own course with regard to linguistic matters, not the least of which was its presumptive decision to host the First Turkish Language Congress of 1990 in lieu of the TDK (c.f., chapter two). More importantly, however, it is in the TDK's clever attempt to capture the attention of Turkish schoolchildren outside the stodgy bounds of standard curriculum that it is possible to ideate the influence of the technologically-interlinked global nature of the present moment where resources on linguistic and orthographic practice that are not under the control of the state (e.g., internet forums, blogs, satellite television, etc.) compete with official policies promulgated through the state-approved program of study.

By demonstrating the ways in which the politics of sociopolitical identity influence linguistic choice, as manifest in linguistic practice, the history of linguistic wrangling presented thus far offers a more nuanced understanding of the complexities of the Turkish linguistic marketplace in which the symbolic power of linguistic variants is not based solely on state sanctioning, as Bourdieu (1991) suggests. Were this the case all foreign words would be subject to elimination or turkification. In contrast, it would seem that there exists a rich and long-standing tradition in Turkey whereby linguistic capital

[93] It is important to note that although a quasi-state institution and the officially designated authority on issues pertaining to the Turkish language, the *Türk Dil Kurumu*, unlike the *L'Académie française*, does not at present have the power to enforce its policies. That said, a bill under current consideration by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey would grant the TDK, along with the Ministries of Education and Culture, the legal right to require that foreign words appearing in advertisements and the media be accompanied by their Turkish equivalent.

may also be accrued through deliberate resistance to or studied disregard for the state sanctioned variant, granting oppositional and/or popular linguistic practices, generally initiated by social progressives and adopted by the public, either deliberately as a sociopolitical status marker or entirely unwittingly, the opportunity to gain traction among the general populace and ultimately influence linguistic policy even as they are themselves influenced, by virtue of their resistance to the norm, by the policies of state apparati and social institutions entrusted with governing language and delimiting the range of available linguistic choice. In that popular usage, by its very nature, is not static, however, state policies designed to circumvent the spread of oppositional linguistic must also remain responsive and nimble, resulting in a dynamic tension between policy and practice, purism and vernacularity, that curiously benefits the vitality of both, even as it deepens the conservative-progressive political divide within contemporary Turkish society and their struggle for control over the Turkish language. Let us now turn, then, to an examination of the ways in which the symbiosis between linguistic policy and linguistic practice, played out through the opposing politics of purism and vernacularity, has likewise influenced the political economy of orthography in Turkey.

ORTHOGRAPHIC INNOVATION AND IDENTITY POLITICS

Returning to orthography, it should first be noted that although the Turkish alphabet has remained unchanged since its adoption in 1928, except for the elimination and subsequent introduction of diacriticals associated with Arabic loanwords, it has not

been unaffected by progressive cycles of language reform or successive waves of foreign language influence. Over the decades, pronounced shifts in usage conventions have emerged in response to these pressures. Western loanwords adopted into the language, for example, were initially spelled on the basis of pronunciation in the language of origin and in accordance with Turkish orthographic conventions, using the Turkish letter or letter combination associated with the equivalent or closest sound (e.g., *qu→k*, *x→ks*, *w→v*, *ph→f*, *tz→s*, *io→yo*, *ch→ ç*, *sh→ş*). Note the following examples:

boutique	*butik*	economy	*ekonomi*
hotel	*otel*	telephone	*telefon*
photograph	*fotograf*	television	*televizyon*
taxi	*taksi*	gendarme	*jandarma*
wagon	*vagon*	show	*şov*
waltz	*vals*	jazz	*caz*
fax	*faks*	gymnastics	*jimnastik*
nutrition	*nütrisyon*	operation	*operasyon*
Churchill	*Çörçil*	Shànghǎi	*Şanghay*
station	*istasyon* (note that *st* cannot occur in Turkish unless separated by a syllable boundary, hence the epenthesis of initial *i*)		

A careful examination of many of the Turkish spellings of these loanwords reveals their origin as French, as is particularly evident in the use of *–yon* for the suffix *–ion* in *nutrition* and *operation* and the absence of initial *h* in *hotel*--three words with identical spelling but divergent pronunciation in English and French. However, as English surpassed French as the primary source of foreign loanwords and American cultural influence overtook French cultural hegemony in Turkey, popular spelling conventions sometimes changed to reflect an Anglicized pronunciation--e.g., *nütrisyon*

becoming *nütrişın* and *operasyon* becoming *opereyşın* (Lewis 1999)--although the original spelling is still the version found in dictionaries.[94] Deliberate shifts in orthographic practice of this sort suggest that like native writers of British Creole, who enact a sociopolitical sensibility distinct from mainstream British culture through non-conventional orthographic practices (Sebba 1998) or Corsican villagers approving road signs or participating in spelling contests, who paradoxically enact a "pure" Corsican identity distinct from the formal domains of French linguistic hegemony by resisting Corsican language activists' efforts to corsicanize French spellings and standardize Corsican spellings (Jaffe 1999a), Turkish progressive elites have deliberately chosen to effectuate a sociopolitical identity that marks them as conversant with Western traditions.

Although to the elite, sociopolitically progressive Turkish speaker, well-versed in foreign languages and cognizant of differences in pronunciation of the same word in French and English, the shift from *operasyon* to *opereyşın* may have been meaningful, offering further nuance to linguistic acts of identity aimed at like-minded compatriots, to the average Turkish speaker, both spellings rendered the loanword equally indistinguishable as foreign as they both complied with Turkish orthographic rules. It is therefore not surprising to note the emergence of a recent propensity toward using the original rather than the turkicized spelling of foreign loanwords--e.g., *boutique* in place of *butik* and *photo* in place of *foto*--as captured in the TDK poster described above. This, in turn, has resulted in the use of foreign loanletters (*q*, *w*, and *x*) or combinations of

[94] Although *operasyon* is commonly used for "operation," most Turks use *gıda* or *beslenme* for "nutrition." The deliberate use of *nütrisyon* as a foreign word in turkified spelling is thus already marked.

letters (i.e., *ou*, *ea, io, ue, ch*, *ck*, *ph*) that do not conform to Turkish morphological and/or orthographic rules. Such practices represent an interesting reversal of the usual dynamics in the struggle over linguistic purism, in which it is generally to the advantage of purists to ensure that foreignisms are clearly marked as foreign in order to better facilitate their removal from the language. As Fishman notes:

> Of course for purity to be attainable at all, the 'opponent(s)' must be made palpably recognizable and, indeed even easily detectable. Such recognizability must not be limited only to the recondite circles of linguists, language activists, or language planners more specifically, but must be made palpably clear and instantly recognizable, to the public of native speakers at large, rather than just to the educated elites, so that ordinary folk too can join in the hunt for 'foreignisms' that need to be exposed and guarded against (2006:25-6).

By contrast, in long-standing struggles over language, identity politics, and national sociopolitical orientation in Turkey that have recently coalesced around the opposing ideological poles of orthographic purity versus vernacularity, it is the practitioners of vernacularity that seek to enhance the recognizability of foreign loanwords through the use of foreign letters or letter combinations based on the assumption that such terms are best able to act as symbolic resources in identity politics when explicitly recognizable as foreign. The decision among progressive elites to mark their use of foreign loanwords orthographically not only enhances their symbolic value among like-minded compatriots, however, but also has broader social implications in terms of hastening their spread to the unwitting populace, where foreign products are often imbued with a mystique or aura of "superiority."

Thus, returning for a moment to the vignette of the woman searching for body wash, I would suggest that were the advertising decision made, as is often the case, to use the English loanword in the packaging of the product instead of the calque "vücüt şampuanı" (calques, despite violating strict purity rules, being the preferred solution of purists to the conundrum of loanwords), spelling "body wash" in accordance with Turkish pronunciation and orthographic conventions, as *badivaş*, might render it easier to locate on the shelf, but would not serve the presumed advertising purpose of marking it as foreign, and hence indexing it as "superior" or "desirable," in the way that spelling it as *body wash* would, for as noted above, the average Turk, possessing little to no knowledge of English, would be unaware that *badivaş* was not a Turkish neologism and therefore fail to understand the intended indexical meaning. By contrast, the *y* and *sh*, which violate Turkish orthographic rules, and the *w*, which is notably absent from the Turkish alphabet, of *body wash* would render the product instantly recognizable as foreign and thus index its putative superiority.

As a result, supporters of linguistic purism, resigned to, but far from sanguine about, the influx of foreign loanwords, seek to diminish their obvious "foreignness" and disguise them alongside fully assimilated loanwords of Arabic and Persian origin by spelling them in accordance with Turkish orthographic conventions, which, while it violates the strictest principles of linguistic purism, nonetheless serves the purists' larger purpose of masking through orthographic turkification the degree to which Turkish is a highly "vernacular" language. In this sense, by limiting the awareness of the foreign origin of the loanword by the average Turkish citizen, linguistic conservatives hope not

only to diminish the potency of and curtail the audience for the acts of identity entailed in the deliberate use of foreign loanwords on the part of their progressive counterparts, but also to reduce the adoption of such terms by those seeking to identify themselves with the progressive elite, who, in turn, serve as vectors for the unwitting adoption of loanwords among others in their socioeconomic class and, hence, speed the untrammeled spread of foreign influence within Turkish society.

In this sense, such trends in orthographic usage clearly suggest that loanletters and proscribed letter combinations have been put to much the same use as the foreign loanwords Kudret (c.f., above) describes--i.e., as a marker of social status and a resources in identity politics. This is further suggested in another, even more recent orthographic innovation. As Turks with little or no facility in foreign languages have either naturally adopted the orthographic innovations that surround them or proactively taken up foreign dictionaries to determine foreign orthographic conventions in an effort to affect the social status indexed by such orthographic practices, orthographic innovation has been taken one step further. With the widespread adoption of foreign loanwords, in their original rather than turkified spellings, those wishing to distinguish themselves by their education and command of foreign languages have turned to spelling native Turkish words according to foreign conventions, i.e., with loanletters and letter combinations. This trend has resulted in Turkish words such as *yemiş* (fruit), *Taksim* (a district in Istanbul), and *eskici* (second-hand dealer) being spelled *yemish, Taxim,* and *eskidji*. *Eskidji* is a particularly fascinating example, since its spelling conforms neither to Turkish nor to English orthographic rules, but instead employs a letter combination, *dj*, sometimes

employed in English, especially by Middle Eastern experts, to represent a phoneme */*(/dʒ/) in words borrowed from Arabic, as in *hadj* and *djin* (rendered as *hac* and *cin* in Turkish), and as such, appears to be a loan of a loan.

The crossover of loanletters and letter combinations from foreign loanwords to native Turkish expressions indexes a creative understanding of foreign spelling conventions that cannot be feigned through reference to foreign dictionaries[95] as it is rooted in an intimate familiarity with the phonological structure of foreign languages. Insofar as it is thus less cooptable by the general public, the use of foreign loanletters to spell Turkish words thus provides more a reliable index of the socioeconomic status of the user. This innovation in orthographic practice thus represents a further step in the exploitation of the symbolic capacity of orthography for the purposes of identity politics. Moreover, since it is orthography that is the modality of linguistic turkification, the use of foreign loanletters to spell Turkish words indexes a reversal of, and hence explicit rejection of, linguistic purism. And, since ideologies of linguistic purism reflect broader sociopolitical beliefs concerning the state of society and its relation to the outside world, such orthographic innovations constitute an expression of progressives' unequivocal desire to disassociate themselves from their conservative counterparts and their commitment to purification through turkification, which, in turn, speaks to larger issues of national politics and foreign policy orientation.

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[95] This has not stopped individuals with limited knowledge of foreign languages, but eager to cash in on the prestige associated with spelling Turkish words with foreign letters, from adopting this practice. Comical misspellings (e.g., *Taxsim* and *eskijdi*) are frequently the result.

In this sense, I would suggest that such orthographic "acts of identity" among Turkish progressives are in keeping with the second half of Le Page and Tabouret-Keller's definition, whereby the individual patterns his linguistic behavior "so as to be unlike those from whom he wishes to be distinguished" rather than like those "with which from time to time he wishes to be identified" (1985:181). More specifically, the linguistic "acts of identity" involved in the deliberate use of foreign loanletters act in the negative along the lines of what Jaffe (1999a) describes as the "logic of oppositional identity." In other words, the use of foreign loanletters and letter combinations does not so much index the desire of Turkish progressives to identify themselves with the people and culture of the language from which the letters originate, although that may be the case for any one individual user, as to position themselves in opposition to those conservative forces within Turkish society whose overriding interest in purifying the Turkish language of foreign influence, pursued largely through turkification of accepted loanwords, they perceive as paralleling foreign policy efforts to strengthen traditional Turkish culture through the pursuit of relations with the ex-Soviet Turkic peoples on the basis of perceived ethnolinguistic and sociocultural commonality. In much the same way that social progressives dismiss such foreign policy initiatives as "pan-Turkism" and "racism," condemning cultural conservatives for seeking to insulate the country from the "dangers" inherent to further integration with the international community and the "risks" born of participation in the global economy, they also deliberately engage in linguistic and orthographic practices that reflect their openness to foreign influence and their belief

in the advantages of geopolitical intercourse with global partners in a rapidly emerging new world order.

As a result, the use of foreign loanletters to spell native Turkish words has been the cause of great consternation among purists. As if it were not bad enough that progressives no longer abided by the turkification of foreign words, they had since turned to "foreignizing" Turkish words in what linguistic conservatives could only interpret as the foreign colonization of the language, or cast more broadly, as the linguistic colonization of the country itself by foreign forces. The purists' angst over the independent future of Turkey called into question by the emergent orthographic practices of Turkey's progressive "fifth column" was recently captured in an award-winning cartoon by Atila Özer in which two characters dressed in professional garb survey a welter of overhead signs posted on tall buildings along an urban street in Turkey, much like the retouched photograph from the TDK's *Burası Türkiye mi?* poster. On the signs, several Turkish letters have been swapped for foreign letters or letter combinations: *i* for *y*, *ş* for *sch* or *sh*, *ç* for *ch*, and *ks* for *x*. Thus, the word *efendi* is rendered *efendy*, *paşa* becomes *pascha*, *çilek* becomes *chilek*, *Arkadaş kafe* becomes *Arkadash cafe*, *Taksim bar* becomes *Taxim bar*, *Dürüm'ün* becomes *Dürüm's*, and *Sultan'ın* becomes *Sultan's*. "These don't strike me as especially foreign, but?!" the two characters remark in unison. This dual assessment of the obvious pollution of the Turkish language represented by the signs suggests that foreign language influence has become so commonplace as to no longer be recognizable as foreign. Moreover, the use of the English possessive *'s* in place of the Turkish equivalent *'in*, as well as the use of Turkish-English combinations in

Arkadash café and *Taxim bar* suggest the hybrid Ottoman constructions of decades past and the Turklish of recent years, symbolically linking three layers of linguistic pollution of the Turkish language originating respectively in loanwords, loanletters, and foreign grammatical constructions.

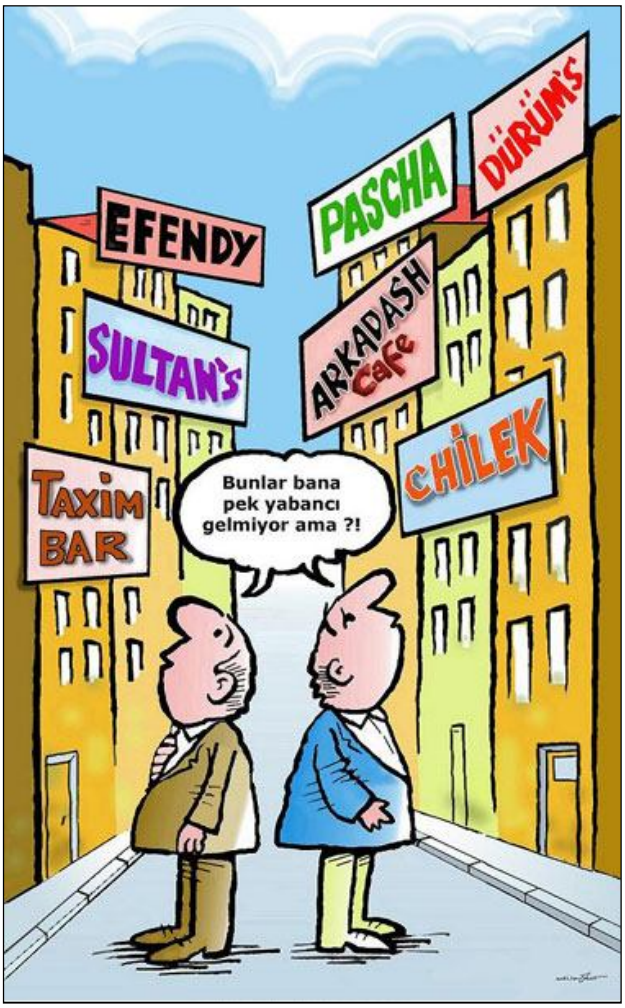

Figure 5.3 Award-winning caricature by Atila Özer[96]

[96] Please see: http://e-psikoloji.com/forum/gulmece-eglenmece-bolumu/3748-burasi-turkiye-mi.html, last accessed August 2, 2011.

Turning to a deeper textual analysis of the cartoon, we find that its symbolic content is far more complex than initially meets the eye. Thus, although we are presented with two men that appear nearly identical in terms of physical appearance, surveying the same urban landscape and arriving at the same conclusion, that is where the similarity ends. Both figures appear to be dressed in professional attire, but upon closer inspection, the man on the left is wearing a business suit (*takim elbise*) and, more importantly, a tie. Although seemingly insignificant, these two elements mark the man on the left as being influenced by Western standards of decorum and places him in opposition to his doppelganger who is dressed in the fully-buttoned dress shirt and non-matching jacket and trousers that indexes the more traditional, conservative, and rural segments of Turkish society. By extension, is it is no coincidence that the man with the tie faces to the left, i.e., westward on a compass, while his top-buttoned counterpart faces right towards the east, as that is where each looks for inspiration.

The visual dialectic these two figures bring to the page is further evinced by the billboards on the two sides of the street. On the left side we see *efendy, Sultan's, Taxim,* and *bar*--each Turkish words of foreign origin (Greek, Arabic, Arabic, and English respectively). On the right side of the street we have the words *pascha, Dürüm's, chilek,* and *Arkadash cafe*, all of which are of Turkmen and Turkish origin (although the word *café* is French, it derives from *kahve*, the Turkish word for coffee). Thus, on the "western" side of the street, we have Turkish words of foreign origin (Middle Eastern and Western), and on the "eastern" side, "native" words of Turkish and Turkic origin--the

latter being considered by linguistic conservatives to be the "essence" of the Turkish language and, hence, ideal of linguistic purism. Also of interest is the convergence of the two rows of buildings, representing east and west, at the apex of urban Turkey--the road running down the middle bisecting these twin traditions while simultaneously forming a "bridge"[97] between them.

Of further importance in deconstructing the message conveyed by the two characters is the fact that each of the words, both left and right, east and west, are not simply "misspelled" but intentionally written with orthographic loanletters and possessive suffixes. Although they appear peculiar, however, none of the words are so "foreign" as to be incomprehensible to a Turkish speaker with even a modicum of English. That, indeed, appears to be the point, as the two men speak with one voice in commenting: "These don't strike me as being particularly foreign, but…" It is that final "but" (*"ama"*), however, that, to paraphrase Gregory Bateson (1972), is "the difference that makes a difference." Were it not for the inclusion of foreign letters, letter combinations, and grammatical elements, the signs would have been only mildly remarkable as foreign--the word "bar" alone would, perhaps, have given some pause.

It is thus the violation of Turkish orthographic rules--this new front in linguistic innovation and identity politics--that "breaks the frame," paving the way for the realization that many "Turkish" words which have been so fully assimilated into the language as to be unwittingly considered Turkish were, at one point, loanwords

[97] See chapter two for a more detailed explanation of the ways in which Turkish politicians have attempted to position Turkey as a "bridge" between East and West in the post-Cold War era.

themselves as well as the subsequent recognition of the layers upon layers of foreign language influence that have been instrumental in the creation of the modern Turkish language. Indeed, the comment that "[t]hese don't strike me as being particularly foreign, but …" suggests that the very orthographic peculiarities that mark that which has become naturalized as "foreign" once again represent a practice that is itself on the cusp of becoming normalized, and hence unremarkable. Finally, on a visual plane, the convergence of the two rows of buildings at the horizon indexes the introduction of European linear perspective on an Islamic tradition of representing the natural world in flat, two-dimensional perspective, thereby further suggesting Turkey's inexorable path toward the West--linguistically, orthographically, and culturally. This cartoon thus represents the angst of the linguistic conservative, or purist, who fears that the average Turk will continue, either deliberately or unwittingly, to follow the linguistic and orthographic example set by the country's elite, Westward-leaning progressives until there is nothing left of traditional Turkish language or culture.

Because the practice of using foreign loanletters to spell native Turkish words is an orthographic innovation so closely associated, in its origins, with Turkey's well-educated, politically progressive, Western-leaning elite, it has also become a recognizable symbolic resource in the age-old rivalry between progressive and conservative political factions within Turkey. In an article published November 24, 2001 in *Radikal* newspaper, columnist Haluk Şahin brings this issue into focus in describing the creative use of Western loanletters by the conservative, Islamic-leaning daily newspaper *Zaman* to render the surname of noted economist Kemal Derviş as "Derwish." Appointed Minister

of Economic Affairs in 2001 under then Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit and tasked with developing an economic recovery plan in the wake of Turkey's devastating 2000-2001 financial crisis, Derviş cut a controversial figure in Turkey, highly respected by some and much reviled by others for his professional achievements and recognized standing within global financial circles. Derviş was particularly mistrusted within conservative circles, where his connection with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund were viewed with suspicion born of a belief that such global financial institutions were part of a Western imperialist conspiracy to keep developing nations, especially those that were Muslim, economically subjugated by granting loans which embroiled them in debt they could never repay. Şahin writes:

> Konuyu biraz ilerletip baska noktalara degineyim diyorum ama, su hinzir 'w' harfi pesimi birakmiyor. Sabahleyin baktim, Islamci gazetelerden birinde sekiz sütuna manset: 'Go Home Derwish'
>
> Evet, Dervis degil, Derwish. Böylece büyükdedeleri Osmanli maliyesini yönetmis Kemal Dervis'i akillari sira yabancilastirmislar….
>
> W harfinin siyasal bir içerik kazanmasi ilk degil. Yakin tarihlere kadar 'Nevruz' yazanlar senlige, 'Newruz' yazanlar ise hapishaneye gitmiyor muydu?
>
> I say let's advance this topic a bit and touch on other points, but this rapacious letter 'w' won't stop pestering me. This morning what do I see but an eight-column headline in one of the Islamist newspapers: "Go Home Derwish."
>
> Yes, not Derviş, but Derwish. In this manner, in their diminished capacity, they foreignized Kemal Derviş whose grandfathers managed Ottoman finances….
>
> This is not the first time the letter *w* has achieved political status. Until just recently didn't those who wrote "Nevruz" join in the holiday festivities while those who wrote

"Newruz"[98] went to jail?

Şahin's description of the way in which Derviş' surname was made foreign as a form of political commentary through deliberate use of the foreign loanletter *w* and letter combination *sh* in place of *v* and *ş* respectively effectively demonstrates the way in which the use of foreign orthographic borrowings have become so closely identified with a progressive political perspective that they have become part of the arsenal of political satire and commentary strategically employed by rival political factions. Used in combination with the phrase "Go home"--written in English, no less--which conjures up the international exhortation "Go home Yankee" often used to protest American involvement overseas, the deliberate misspelling of Derviş' surname had the effect of transforming even this august figure with an impeccable national pedigree stretching back to the Ottoman Empire into a foreign agent, if not a virtual foreigner himself.

Şahin's final comment likening the deliberate misspelling of Derviş' surname to the use of the Kurdish *w* in place of the Turkish *v* in the name for *Newroz*, the Persian New Year celebrated by the Turkic and Kurdish peoples, recalls the involvement of orthography in another politically fraught matter of national concern that pitted leftist sympathizers against rightist foes of the nominally Marxist Kurdistan Workers' Party dedicated to ending Kurdish oppression by the Turkish state. Mainly celebrated by

[98] This is a reference to *Nowrūz*, the ancient Iranian new year--celebrated on the vernal equinox by Muslims across Turkey, Central Asia, and in parts of the Middle East--which Turks spell *Nevruz* and Kurds spell *Newruz*. Since for many years, the holiday sparked violent Kurdish protests against the Turkish state, those who spelled *Nevruz* using of the letter *w* instead of the letter *v* were accused of harboring sympathies for Kurdish separatism.

Turkey's Kurds, *Newroz* came to symbolize the Kurdish struggle for recognition and cultural autonomy and was generally marked by violent protests, leading the Turkish government to ban its celebration throughout the 1990s. In 2000, Ankara reappropriated the holiday, legalizing its celebration and organizing state-sponsored festivities. The newly resurrected holiday was spelled in accordance with Turkish orthographic rules as *Nevruz* and the Kurdish spelling, which included an illicit *w*, was banned, allowing Turkish authorities to jail Kurdish activists seeking to reanimate its symbolic power as emblematic of Kurdish oppression by spelling it with a letter not found in the Turkish alphabet. Thus, it becomes clear that although loanletters may have first arrived via loanwords, their use has since shifted to the extent that not only socioeconomic status, but also sociopolitical orientation, can now be indexed through orthography alone.

MODERN COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND ORTHOGRAPHIC INNOVATION

Orthographic rules have also undergone shifts in conjunction with the adoption of new communications technology, and it is within this context that the shift of orthographic innovations from an explicit index of sociopolitical identity to a more generalized public phenomenon is hastened. Exchanging cellphone text messages with Turkish friends, I was immediately struck that they often omitted diacriticals or, more accurately, substituted the closest English letter for the six special characters of the

Turkish alphabet--i.e, they used *c*, *g*, *i*, *o*, *s*, *u* in place of *ç*, *ğ*, *ı*, *ö*, *ş*, *ü* respectively.[99] This practice was largely driven by economic considerations, for although text messages were less expensive than calls, text messages that contained "non-standard" characters--i.e., the six special characters of the Turkish alphabet--were charged higher rates than those that didn't.[100] Furthermore, I was told, it was a timesaver. Since all available cellphones were marketed internationally, the first letter to appear when pressing a key was the unmarked variant, and finding that letter with the appropriate diacritical--if it even existed--required pressing the same key a number of times to scroll through additional options. Thus, many Turks saved time and effort by simply opting for the unmarked variant. After all, they explained, "*vakit nakittir*" ("time is money"). Such economy of time and effort seemed to reach a whole new level, however, when some savvy texters began omitting vowels from their messages, reportedly also in aid of saving time and effort.[101] What struck me about this new trend was, first, the relative ease with which even a non-native speaker like myself could understand the intended message and,

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[99] Although most Turks seemed to use *c* and *s* in place of *ç* and *ş*, some used *ch* and *sh* instead, the difference here being whether they privileged appearance over pronunciation or vice versa.

[100] In 2006, the surprising additional cost for sending texts with proper Turkish characters was finally raised with the Telecommunications Association, and the decision was taken to forbid cell phones that did not offer Turkish characters from entering the country and to do away with the additional cost associated with using those characters when texting. For additional information, see http://www.dildernegi.org.tr/TR/BelgeGoster.aspx?F6E10F8892433CFFAAF6AA849816B2EFC78A84C0A88D75FE, last accessed August 2, 2011.

[101] Although context often prevents misunderstandings, this practice becomes problematic with vowel final words like *sene*, which become *sn* and hence could be *sen*, *son*, *sana* etc.

second, how this ease of comprehension implicitly belied the very basis for the Turkish alphabet reform nearly a century earlier--namely, that the difficulties associated with representing vowels in the Arabic alphabet rendered it unsuited to a vowel-rich language such as Turkish, as detailed above. This inherent contradiction didn't seem to bother my Turkish friends, however, even after I pointed it out. "It's different," one friend replied, "because I can always choose to insert the vowels if there's any possibility of misunderstanding. This is just a quick and easy way of texting, it doesn't mean I think we should rid the alphabet of vowels."

Although such pragmatic explanations cast these trends in orthographic usage in terms consistent with classic political economy--i.e., orthographic choices made on the basis of economic and quasi-economic considerations--I was not convinced that this was the full extent of the matter. In particular, I suspected that other more abstract considerations were also at play, namely that omitting diacriticals and vowels was not just a timesaver, but constituted a creative performative choice. In short, it was simply more "trendy" or "hip." These suspicions seemed borne out by a series of billboard advertisements that appeared in downtown Ankara around 2001 which recognized and tapped into these orthographic trends in text messaging to attract the attention of potential customers. The advertisements were for Telsim, one of Turkey's cellphone service providers, and depicted a cellphone screen with a short text message *sans* vowels.

Further confirmation came several years later when Turkey's largest cellphone service provider, Turkcell, launched a television ad campaign aimed at promoting membership in its youth club (http://gnctrkcll.turkcell.com.tr/), which offers access to

select calling features and other benefits designed to appeal to Turkish youth. The name of the club, pronounced /gentʃtyrksel/ (youthturkcell), instead of being written *gençtürksel* is rendered--absent the vowels and the cedilla with a double *l* and the letter *c* replacing *s*--as *gnctrkcll*.[102] As evidence of *gnctrkcll*'s "hipness," several of its ads have been posted to YouTube and have reported significant viewer volume. As the following description demonstrates, such ads offer a glimpse into the ways in which an alternative linguistic market is generated through creative discursive and orthographic practices:

An apartment door opens and a young women appears, her smile fading to dismay. "*Aşkım, ben geldim*," ("Honey, I'm here") a young Turkish man wearing a black t-shirt with the words I♥YOU written across the chest says, proudly beaming at her. "*Ben ayrılmak istiyorum, Barbaros*," ("I want to break up, Barbaros") she replies. "*Neden*," ("Why") he asks, looking dismayed. "*Hep aynı şey giyiyorsun, Barbaros*." ("You always wear the same thing, Barbaros") "*Ama aşkım*, I love you,"[103] ("But honey, I love you") he replies glancing down at the t-shirt. "*Bu şekilde*, I don't love you, *Barbaros*," ("I don't love you like this") she asserts, washing her hands of him. "*Aşkım, ben bunu ikimizin aşkımızı simgesi olarak yaptım. Bak, burada* I, *benim*, YOU, *sensin, kalp da ikimizin*..." ("Honey, I did this as a symbol of our love. Look, here I is I, YOU is you, and the heart is our….") he starts to explain pointing to the corresponding words on the t-shirt before the door slams shut. The announcer then promotes the 25% discount

[102] As an aside, it is worth noting that the *cell* of *turkcell* is spelled and pronounced as it is in English, although the letter *c* in Turkish is pronounced like English *j* and the common Turkish term for cell phone is *cep* (short for *cep telefonu*, meaning "pocket telephone").

[103] To highlight the characters' codeswicthing, I have highlighted English loanwords in blue characters.

gnctrkcll members receive on certain popular youth clothing brands (e.g., Mavi Jeans, T-box, and Koton (Cotton[104])), suggesting that Barbaros run out ("*Yürü, Barbaros! Yürü*!") and take advantage of this as the *gnctrkcll* logo pops up. Barbaros then reappears at his girlfriend's door, looking hip in his new clothes and accessories, with a classic American blues riff playing in the background. He tilts his sunglasses down at her, and she looks him up and down approvingly, arching her eyebrows provocatively. She throws her arms around him exclaiming: "*Şu I love you yazan t-shirtı değiştirdiğini inanamıyorum.*" ("I can't believe that you changed that t-shirt with the I love you writing"). Barbaros looks chagrined as the camera angle switches to the rear and we see that he has simply reversed the t-shirt such that the I♥YOU is now in the back.[105]

Figure 5.4 %25 İndirim: Screen shot from a *gnctrkcll* commercial posted to YouTube

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[104] "Koton" is used here for the English "cotton," in place of the Turkish *pamuk*. Use of the turkified spelling of the foreign word (it cannot really be considered a loanword, being used in no other context) suggests that the brand was developed before recent innovations in orthographic practice, although in a sense, the hybridized name represents an orthographic version of "Turklish."

[105] Please see: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sFGnR5A_ffE, last accessed August 2, 2011.

Figure 5.5 I♥YOU: Screen shot from a *gnctrkcll* commercial posted to YouTube

Although any Turk familiar with English will immediately understand the writing on Barbaros' t-shirt, by having him explicitly explain its symbolic meaning ("Look, here I is I, YOU is you, and the heart is our…"), the ad teaches the English equivalent of Turkish words to young Turks, offering a comic counterpoint to the TDK's attempts at popularizing Turkish language equivalents for foreign loanwords. The young woman's mid-sentence codeswitching between English and Turkish ("*Bu şekilde*, I don't love you, *Barbaros*") furthermore models "Turklish" for receptive young viewers. Is it any wonder, then, that foreign loanwords and loanletters are becoming ever more widespread and orthographic conventions more creative and "vernacular" when marketing campaigns that are contemporary, clever and responsive to trends in youth culture continue to be countered primarily by word lists of proposed Turkish equivalents publicized in *Türk Dili* and modeled on the TDK's website?

While text messaging seems to have led the way in introducing nonstandard orthographic practices, computer use has also had an effect. In this sense, the interface between users and information technology, particularly in relation to internet usage--i.e., emails, blogs, and instant messaging--has likewise influenced orthographic practice in Turkey. As with cell phone texting, diacriticals are often omitted from *ö* and *ü*, dotted *i* stands in for undotted *ı*, and *ç* and *ş* are written *c* or *ch* and *s* or *sh* in online texts. Unlike cellphone texting, however, such orthographic practices do not always appear to be employed as a time saver or a creative performative choice, but rather seem, in many cases, to have more to do with technological access, default settings, and the technological savvy of the individual user. Nonetheless, such practices still have the potential to cause shifts in standard orthographic usage.

Typing in the Turkish alphabet requires the use of a specialized character encoding scheme which redesignates certain keys on a standard keyboard to represent the five special Turkish characters. These characters may nonetheless fail to be recognized by the intended recipient if his or her computer does not have the necessary drivers and software installed or has not been configured to utilize compatible character set specifications and may not translate properly to the internet, i.e., blogs, and webpages, if the relevant server does not also utilize the proper character encoding scheme. The resulting document will display the characters Ð, Ý, Þ, ð, ý, þ in place of the special Turkish letters Ğ, İ, Ş, ğ, ı, ş, requiring some effort to decipher and additional practice to

read with ease.[106] Since *G/g* and *Sh*/*sh* (or *S/s*) are arguably more closely recognizable than *Ð/ð* and *Þ/þ* as the Turkish letters *Ğ/ğ* and *Ş/ş*, and the need for or against a dot over a capital and lowercase *i* is generally determinable on the basis of Turkish rules of vowel harmony, there is little practical incentive for Turkish users to struggle with the vagaries of technology in an effort, which will more often than not go awry, to use a proper Turkish font, especially when most users will have no difficulty recognizing the substitution of *sh* for *ş*, *g* for *ğ*, and *i* for *ı*. While problems stemming from different encoding schemes may have hastened or popularized the shift away from the use of diacriticals associated with the "special characters" of Turkish, the practice of employing foreign letters and letter combinations in foreign as well as Turkish words has continued, despite not being driven by technical difficulties, suggesting that such innovations in orthographic practice continue to act as a sociopolitical status marker of an educated progressive outlook.

By contrast, the use of another, more archaic, diacritical--the circumflex over the *a*, *i*, and u (*â*, *î*, and *û*)--has recently reemerged in online contexts. In 1977, in the only adjustment to the Turkish alphabet since its adoption in 1928, the TDK made the decision to eliminate the circumflex, ostensibly in an effort to "unmark" Arabic and Persian loanwords that had been irreversibly absorbed into the Turkish language. The economy of effort this decision represented for users meant that it was quickly adopted and has

[106] Given that I am not especially well-versed in the technical aspects the topic, I would direct interested readers to a more precise explanation of technological incompatibilities that prevent special Turkish characters from displaying properly, which can be found at the following web address: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki_special_characters/Turkish, last accessed August 2, 2011.

endured despite a reversal of the TDK policy a decade later under the influence of a new approach, described above, that reassessed the acceptability of Arabic- and Persian-sourced words on the basis of shared Islamic culture. Given the infrequency with which the circumflex appears in modern written Turkish, its deliberate inclusion identifies users as linguistically and socially conservative, simultaneously indexing their belief in the TDK's mandate as final arbiter over issues related to the Turkish language and alphabet and reflecting the TDK's revised stance on Islamic-sourced loanwords. This, in turn, marks the reintroduction of the circumflex as qualitatively different from the introduction of loanletters--the difference being that while both practices demonstrate orthographic creativity, the former counts as revivalist and, under revised definitions, purist, the latter as innovative and vernacular, the former being the purview of linguistic conservatives, the latter of linguistic progressives. As a final comment concerning the sociopolitical dimensions of the revived usage of the circumflex, I would simply note that in the editorial by Yusuf Çotuksöken entitled "Türk Cumhuriyetleri mi, Türki Cumhuriyetler mi, Türksel Cumhuriyetler mi?" excerpted in the previous chapter, the term *Türkî*, in keeping with *Cumhuriyet* newspaper's center left political affiliation and elite readership, was printed without the circumflex, as *Türki*, requiring Çotuksöken to engage in the verbal gymnastics of explaining proper pronunciation, albeit <u>not</u> proper spelling, of the term within the text of the article, writing: "'Türki' (türki: the final sound is elongated)."

CONCLUSION

Noting the global prevalence of efforts aimed at purifying languages of "foreign" influence, Fishman writes: "Just as polities do not permit foreign powers to establish a foothold on their soil, so some languages have been struggling for generations not to permit foreign languages to establish 'beachheads' in their language. Such struggles can go on for generations and are indications of the hold of history on current usage" (2006:28). Although undoubtedly an accurate assessment of the general importance placed on language purity by many societies, Fishman's quote seems to assume a united polity in the face of "foreign" influence and hence fails to capture the role that both the explicit assertion, as well as deliberate rejection, of purism may play in domestic politics within a society. Thus, while the history of the Turkish language and alphabet reforms is of decades of top-down management of linguistic resources in aid of the creation of a cohesive national character and an integrated social identity free from outside influence, the Turkish language has nonetheless proven prone not only to natural language shift and persistent external pressures, but also to deliberate manipulation as "acts of identity" in the domestic struggle over identity politics.

In the post Cold-war era, this process has entered a new domain as innovations in orthographic practice have emerged among sociopolitically progressive elite speakers and spread rapidly within the Turkish public, with the result that alphabet, like language, has become an independent resource in social indexing and "acts of identity" and hence a contested site for the negotiation of identity politics. This, in turn, suggests the fractured nature of Turkey's linguistic marketplace and the existence of two separate, but equally

powerful, sources of linguistic legitimation that are indicative of a deep-seated and long-standing political rift in Turkish society between cultural conservatives and social progressives. The political economy of language and orthography in Turkey is thus defined by the opposing ideologies of linguistic purism, advocated by cultural conservatives and promulgated by the state, and vernacularity, practiced by social progressives and either emulated or unwittingly adopted by the general public. In this sense, linguistic acts of identity bespeak identity politics not only at the individual socioeconomic level, but also at the national sociopolitical level, and thus suggest broader implications for foreign policy orientation.

Within the shifting political economy of orthographic practice, then, the widespread use of characters that are not found in the Turkish alphabet, including the letters *q*, *x*, and *w*, and letter combinations that violate Turkish orthographic conventions, such as *sh* and *dj*, as well as the increasing use of such foreign letters and letter combinations to spell Turkish words suggests an ideological rejection of the principles of purism and a staunch preference for vernacularity both linguistically and politically. The emergence of such innovations in orthographic practice are, however, particularly troubling to linguistic conservatives who have already made pragmatic concessions to strict purism over the years by allowing for some foreign loanwords to be accepted into the language as long as they are "turkified," or spelled in accordance with Turkish orthographic rules, such that their "foreignness" is disguised from the average Turkish speaker. Thus, with absolute purism recognized as futile, control over orthography, the modality of turkification, becomes all the more important to maintaining at least the

appearance of purism and, hence, the salience of purist ideology. The spread of foreign loanletters and letter combinations, the use of foreign orthographic conventions in spelling not just loanwords but native Turkish words, and the increasing omission of Turkish diacriticals and vowels among the general Turkish public, whether for reasons of "hipness" or lack of technological competence on the part of the user, clearly transgress the bounds of earlier concessions to linguistic vernacularity, thereby suggesting a "slippery slope" that seems to call into question not only the autonomous future of the Turkish language, but also the very sovereignty of the Turkish nation.

As a result, the conservative response to innovations in linguistic and orthographic practice has tended to take a broader geopolitical view on the issue, linking foreign letters to Western loanwords and casting Turkey as under linguistic assault from the West. In this sense, although ostensibly focused on linguistic pollution, concerns over orthographic innovation bespeak anxieties of a sociopolitical nature, indexing fears of Western imperialism which have become particularly pronounced in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union. The cumulative effect of recent orthographic trends and the conservative response thus reveals a preoccupation with Turkish national identity politics which, by focusing attention on the purported threat posed by the West and the concomitant implications of Western cultural imperialism to the exclusion of other geopolitical considerations of either a positive or negative nature, ultimately contributed to derailing the ability of Turkish linguists and language professionals to exploit the sociopolitical opportunities afforded by the post-Cold war shift in the geopolitical equilibrium of the region to effectuate linguistic, sociocultural, and geopolitical

rapprochement within the Turkic world, thereby largely presaging the ultimate abandonment of the *ortak alfabe* and *ortak dil* projects.

Chapter Six: Turkey, the West, and the Greater Turkic World: Betwixt and Between Two *X*s, Two *Q*s, and a *W*

On this beautiful Sunday day, for your untroubled mind, a trouble from me: the "W" problem! I don't even know whether you read it "dablyu" or "dubleve." "W" is a letter not found in our alphabet. Not found in our alphabet, but a pertinacious letter, the dimensions of which grow ever greater as life goes on. (*Su güzelim pazar günü, dertsiz basiniza bir dert de benden: "W" sorunu! Artik "dablyu" mu okursunuz, "dubleve" mi, bilemiyorum. "W" alfabemizde bulunmayan bir harf. Alfabemizde bulunmayan, ama hayatimizda gittikçe daha fazla boy gösteren sirnasik bir harf!*)

Haluk Şahin
Should Our Alphabet Change? *(Alfabemiz Değişmeli Mi?)*[107]

THE METALINGUISTICS OF ORTHOGRAPHIC DEBATE

Trends in orthographic usage in Turkey described in chapter five had not escaped the notice of language professionals and social commentators, and in November 2001, the subject was taken up by liberal social democratic columnist Haluk Şahin in an editorial entitled "Should our Alphabet Change?" ("*Alfabemiz Değişmeli Mi?*"). The editorial, which appeared in the 18 November 2001 edition of the left-leaning daily newspaper *Radikal*, was posted the same day to the online Turkoloji-L discussion group by administrator Mehmet Tutuncu, touching off an animated two and a half week debate about orthography that offers a unique opportunity to examine the ways in which long-standing ideologies of linguistic purism have been challenged by recent innovations in orthographic practice within Turkey. Moreover, seen within the context of efforts to unite the Turkic peoples through the creation of an *ortak alfabe* and *ortak dil*, the

[107] The article from which this quote was taken appeared in *Radikal* November 18, 2001.

discourse of the online orthography debates powerfully demonstrates the checkered fortunes of attempts at supranational linguistic unification and hence the larger politics of the post-Soviet Turkic world. Thus, by contrasting official announcements and pronouncements with the vibrant practices of ordinary people employing orthography as an expression of sociopolitical identity, the focused discussion of orthographic policy and practice that consumed Turkoloji-L reveals metalinguistic attitudes toward orthography which, in turn, suggest underlying concerns over such larger sociopolitical issues as globalism, imperialism, nationalism, and pan-Turkism as they play across the linguistic marketplace.

The focus on orthography, though critiqued by some contributors to the debate as a regrettable distraction from the "real" issue of foreign language influence, marks a shift, in a country long saturated by discourse on the politics of language, toward an understanding that characters used to represent spoken language possess a comparable capacity to represent features of the social world. In the course of the orthography debates, it furthermore emerges that the social symbolic character of such letters is neither static nor fixed, meaning that orthography possesses the ability to not only represent the social world but also index manifold constructions of it.

TURKOLOJI-L AND THE DIALECTICS OF ONLINE DEBATE

Before turning to a discursive examination of the debate, some practical issues pertaining to the online forum that hosted it, and the ways in which the medium framed

the discourse, bear mention. Turkoloji-L, otherwise known as *Türkoloji Haberleşme ve Tartışma Topluluğu* (Turcology News and Discussion Group), is a listserver discussion group hosted on Yahoo Groups which was founded in November 1998 and currently boasts over 2200 members internationally. Subscription to the group is open, and news items, announcements, opinion pieces, and commentary pertaining to issues of Turkish language, literature, history, art, and the Turkic world are posted by group members or list administrator Mehmet Tutuncu for consideration and discussion. Although much of the posted material is generated by members themselves, the online presence maintained by most newspapers and many television outlets makes it a simple matter for members to search out relevant articles and upload them into the Turkoloji-L forum, resulting in significant interplay between the discussion group and traditional mass media.

Such dialogism between traditional media outlets and more contemporary media fora in which readers are not simply consumers of the news but rather active participants in its construction was a key element in shaping the orthography debates. Although in the traditional print media format, controversial topics broached by one columnist are often taken up by others, it nonetheless remains difficult to conceive of a smattering of opinion pieces scattered across politically diverse newspapers with discrete readership as social dialogue, even when this illusion is created through reciprocal commentary and judicious quotation.

Within the context of Turkoloji-L, however, it is possible for members to post opinion pieces and columns appearing in newspapers ranging across the political spectrum from nationalist *Hürriyet* to liberal *Radikal* and center-right *Milliyet* to

conservative *Yeni Şafak* to a single listserver, allowing for the cross-fertilization of ideas and eliciting further commentary and discussion among listserver subscribers. By providing a forum in which the various news and opinion articles published on a particular topic are amassed, Turkoloji-L effectively creates a dialogic space in which ambient news commentary is recontextualized through juxtaposition as well as through exposure to a wider chorus of commentary from voices not often heeded in mainstream media.

It is furthermore important to note that some of the Turkish excerpts included below will appear incorrect to a speaker of Turkish as several of the "special characters" of the Turkish alphabet (e.g., *Ğ/ğ, Ş/ş, İ/ı*) are displayed without their distinguishing diacritical marks (i.e., *G/g, S/s, I/i*), whereas others (i.e., *â, î, û*) appear with diacriticals that have long since fallen from common use. As emerges in the course of the debate, such orthographic incompatibility across the postings appears to be largely the result of font incompatibilities stemming from hardware and software obsolescence and/or varying levels of technological competence among contributing members.

I have nonetheless deliberately left the excerpted texts as they appeared in the listserver distribution on the grounds that, as discussed in chapter five, the use of archaic diacriticals appears, in many instances, to have been a deliberate choice on the part of the contributor marking his/her orthographic ideology. Furthermore, the absence of special characters, even when attributable to font incompatibilities and not indicative of intentional choice, touched off a spin-off discussion regarding orthographic rights and responsibilities among certain participants to the orthographic debates, many of whom

believed that such incompatibilities and associated difficulties bespoke Western imperialism, of a technological, if not orthographic, nature. In this sense, those who chose to make use of archaic diacriticals were able to do so only because diacriticals that have fallen from use in Turkish are found in the various Western languages. The more robust technological attention these characters have received than the "special characters" of the Turkish alphabet thus suggests the import of global linguistic hierarchy in determining orthographic availability and constraining choice.

DO LOANLETTERS ARRIVE ON THE BACK OF LOANWORDS? AND OTHER QUESTIONS OF ORTHOGRAPHIC IDEOLOGY

Turning now to the actual alphabet discussions hosted on Turkoloji-L, let us begin with an initial look at the editorial that set off the firestorm--Şahin's "Should our Alphabet Change?" Şahin's provocative article begins by addressing the increasing use of "letters not found in our alphabet" ("*alfabemiz bulunmayan harflar*") in all spheres of Turkish society. Lamenting this near ubiquitous use of loanletters, Şahin expresses particular concern with the prevalence of the letter *w*, which he claims first infiltrated the Turkish language decades ago but has recently become unavoidable largely due to the advent of the World Wide Web. "While formerly seeing this letter on our streets only once in a blue moon," he writes, "we now see this letter every second. For example, a minibus passes by, on top not only is there no familiar minibus writing advertising who is king of this realm, there's an internet address: http://www.bizimminibus.com!" ("*Bu harfi*

eskiden sokaklarimizda kirk yilda bir görürken, artik her dakika görüyoruz. Örnegin, bir minibüs geçiyor yaninizdan, üzerinde sadece bu âlemde kralin kim oldugunu ilan eden malum minibüs yazilari yok, bir internet adresi de var: http://www.bizimminibus.com!"). He then goes on to detail the way in which the importunate letter first infiltrated the Turkish language decades ago on the sly and how, while then constrained in its influence, it now runs roughshod over Turkey's urban landscape.

Şahin is further troubled by evidence that the average Turkish speaker lacks a clear understanding of the proper use of the letter let alone any idea of how to reference it (i.e., *dublyu*, *ikive*, or *dubleve*).[108] Citing the widespread hypercorrective pronunciation of "Harvard" as "Harward" when referencing the prestigious university in Massachusetts as an example of popular confusion over the pronunciation of the letter *w*,[109] Şahin's article recalls the established discourse of Turkish social commentators such as Cevdet Kudret (c.f., chapter five) who argue that that use of foreign loanletters has become a sociocultural status symbol, leaving the average Turkish speaker to mimic the urban

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[108] There appears to be disagreement and confusion over whether the name for the letter *w* in Turkish should follow English pronunciation (*dublyu*), direct Turkish translation (*ikive*), or be rendered as a hybrid of the two (*dubleve*).

[109] In this case, there appears to be confusion among non-English-speaking Turks about the pronunciation of the *v* in Harvard. Knowing that foreign loanwords and proper names were often transcribed into Turkish using the closest equivalent letter, Turks are prone to mistakenly believe that all *v*'s in foreign words spoken in Turkish represent *w*'s in the original language. Such confusion is further exacerbated by the fact that the letter *w* is pronounced /w/ in English, but /v/ in German, thus conforming to the English (and Turkish) letter *v*. This confusion persists even among language professionals, as noted by Dutch linguist Johan Vandewalle who reports in a posting to the orthography debates that his name is often misspelled Wandervalle or Wanderwalle in the appreciative plaques and documents he receives in commemoration of his participation in Turkish conferences, symposia, etc.

elite's use of foreign borrowings without any direct knowledge of accepted pronunciation conventions in the languages of origin. Quoting another respected social commentator whom he describes as having been actively engaged in a decades-long, pitched battle against cultural imperialism, Şahin writes: "It is said that the key to the new century is the internet. However, the key to the internet is *www*. In other words, three iterations at once of a letter not found in our alphabet. Does this not symbolize what our situation in the new century will be?" ("*Yeni çagin anahtarinin internet oldugu söyleniyor. Internet'in anahtari ise www. Yani alfabemizde bulunmayan harften üç tane birden! Bu bile yeni çagda durumumuzun nasil olacagini simgelemiyor mu?"*). He seems to fear that it does, implying that Turkey's lack of the letter *w*, will relegate it to second-class citizen in the new world order: "Yes, the situation is clear. By virtue of the internet, the letter w has become one of the letters most in use and this letter is not in our alphabet. This letter confronts everyone in written form, yet no one knows how it should be pronounced" ("*Evet, durum açik. Internet nedeniyle 'w' harfi en çok kullanilan harflerden birisi haline geldi ve bu harf alfabemizde yok. Bu harf yazili olarak herkesin karsisina çikiyor, ama kimse nasil okunacagini bilmiyor"*).

Something must be done, Şahin opines, asking if these letters ought to take their place in the Turkish alphabet. He recounts having put this question to two renowned Turkish language specialists and his surprise that their responses neglected to pay homage to the Turkish alphabet as Ataturk's legacy and the honor of the Turkish nation by suggesting that the foreign letters might beneficially be adopted in response to changing conditions, if only for use in foreign loanwords: "The two of them both said

that under changing conditions it would be appropriate for these letters to be ushered into our alphabet," he writes. "One qualified his opinion by saying 'Of course, only for use in foreign words.' Not a single person in the conference hall said anything like 'Alphabet is our honor. It is Ataturk's legacy. We ought not even hint at it.'" ("*Her ikisi de, degisen kosullar altinda, bu harflerin de alfabemize buyur edilmesinin uygun olacagini söylediler. Birisi 'Tabii, sadece yabanci kelimelerde kullanilmak üzere' diyerek görüsünü niteledi. Salondan hiç kimse de 'Alfabemiz bizim onurumuzdur. Atatürk'ün armaganidir. Ona dokundurtmayiz,' türünden seyler söylemedi."*) Şahin ends by again asking his readers to consider whether the time has come to add foreign loanletters to the Turkish alphabet.

DISCOURSES OF INFILTRATION AND ASSAULT: LINGUISTIC CONTAMINATION, ORTHOGRAPHIC INVASION, SOCIAL POLLUTION, AND CULTURAL IMPERIALISM

In broad strokes, the substance of Şahin's article touches on key issues of orthographic ideology that both allude to Turkey's complicated sociolinguistic history and acknowledge the country's changing sociopolitical circumstances. From a rhetorical perspective, what is immediately striking is Şahin's repeated use of the metaphoric language of infiltration and assault to characterize the proliferation of foreign loanletters in Turkish society. For instance, he writes:

'W' harfi aslinda dilimize karsi	The letter 'w' began its infiltration

giristigi sizma harekâtina WC ile baslamisti. […]	maneuvers against our language with WC. […]
Ancak bu sizma harekâti, söz konusu etkinligin sinirliligi nedeniyle tam basarili olamamisti. Bu kez w'lar pitrak gibi çogaliyor, kimse önünde duramiyor. […]	However this infiltration, due to the limited nature of the activity in question, appears to have been unable to fully succeed. This time w's multiply like burrs, no one can stand in their way. […]
Bu 'w' harfinin, çaktirmadan hamle yaptigi durumlar da oluyor.[110]	There are instances where the 'w' has attacked on the sly.

Such allusions to forcible entry resonate with long-standing discourses of linguistic pollution first mustered to justify the expulsion of Arabic and Persian loanwords during the Turkish language reform of the early republican era and periodically revisited as the Türk Dil Kurumu (TDK) marshaled its forces in repeated attempts to curtail the entry of Western loanwords it described as a "contagion" (*bulaşim*) that had "infected" (*sirayet etmek*) Turkish society (c.f., chapter five). Şahin's article thus reframes time-honored Turkish concern over linguistic pollution, focusing on orthography and awakening a sense of anxiety over contact not just with foreign languages, but also the alphabets they employ.

According to Paul Wexler, perceived linguistic pollution, such as the influx of loanwords and increasing use of rival orthographic systems, often fuels "the native speaker's fear that his language could be displaced as a politically recognized language of

[110] In this text the Turkish letters *ı*, *ş*, and *ğ* have been replaced by *i*, *s*, and *g*, while the letter *â* appears with diacritical intact. Although this article appears with the diacriticals of special characters intact on *Radikal*'s website, for technical reason beyond my ability to explain, when the article was posted to Turkoloji-L, the diacriticals on these three letters were lost.

the community (and hence replaced by another language)…" (1971:346). Such fears, in turn, tend to awaken an active interest in linguistic purism, broadly defined by E. Annamalai as "the opening and closure of sources of enrichment…the opening of the native sources and the closure of the non-native sources" (1979:36). Insofar as the distinction between native and non-native sources is not always clear-cut in actual practice, however, distinctions are often made on the basis of a perceived linguistic ideal. Such a notional ideal is not only synchronic by nature, but often amounts to a simulacrum, and attempts to revive it, generally entail judgments of a non-linguistic nature, involving ideological assumptions demarcating "indigenous" from "foreign" which center around the question of "who we are and who we are not." While fear of language loss thus lies at the center of concerns raised by linguistic pollution, Herderian notions of linguistic nationalism permeate sociolinguistic folk ideologies to such a degree that the native speaker inevitably perceives the pollution of his/her language by foreign linguistic elements as the potential source of a concomitant loss of cultural identity. Fear of language degeneration is thus inextricably tied to anxiety over cultural adulteration precipitated by unwanted external influence.

In this sense, the inevitable conflation of language and culture which lies at the heart of ideologies of linguistic purism frequently precipitates the vilification of loanwords and foreign constructions as agents of unwelcome social influence, as suggested by Brian Weinstein's (1989) research into "francophonie," the global movement aimed at purifying and revitalizing the French language. The prevalence of this trend is further substantiated by Joshua Fishman's (1988) research into the U.S.-

based "English Only" movement which reveals the ways in which the perceived ill effects of foreign language contact is associated with the unwholesome social influence non-natives are thought to exert on local culture. Michael Herzfeld's examination of Turkish/Greek diglossia and perceptions of language mixing among indigenous Greeks likewise points to a link between linguistic and cultural pollution in the minds of members of a speech community, whereby "[l]inguistic pollution often models other kinds of pollution: both are a problem of disemia, and both are expressed in the architectonic terms of inclusion and exclusion" (1987:116).

Although the work of these three researchers, and indeed that of most scholars of language purism, focuses on spoken language, similar strains of metadiscursive commentary emerging within the context of the Turkish orthography debates clearly suggest that much the same can be said for written language, especially as pertains to foreign orthographic conventions and loanletters. Such metadiscursive parallelism is largely attributable to a tacit understanding that both language and alphabet act not only as communicative media but also as independent, if interrelated, symbolic resources fully capable of indexing social identity, bolstered, in turn, by the accepted assumption that orthographic borrowings have appeared in Turkish as a result of foreign loanwords.

The perception that loanletters arrive on the back of loanwords and are harbingers of foreign social influence and global hierarchies of power was first voiced by Şahin who, in characterizing the pervasiveness of the letter *w* as an invasion, employs various discursive devices that cast it as irretrievably foreign to the Turkish language and threatening to Turkish cultural sovereignty. Moving fluidly from well-established

discourses of linguistic pollution to newer anti-Western/anti-capitalist rhetoric, Şahin traces the letter's inexorable proliferation across the Turkish landscape in recent years, beginning with its purported Turkish debut in a rather undignified lexical borrowing. He writes:

> 'W' harfi aslinda dilimize karsi giristigi sizma harekâtina WC ile baslamisti. Amerikanca 'water closet' kelimesinin kisaltilmisi olan bu kelime, nedense, dilimizde ayni anlama gelen kenef, abdesthane, ayakyolu ve hatta Fransizca kökenli tuvalet gibi kelimelere tercih edilmisti. ('Nedense' dediysem, lafin gelisi, Amerikan hamburgeri yiyen bir neslin WC'ye gitmesi gayet tutarli aslinda!)
>
> The letter w actually appears to have begun infiltration maneuvers against our language with the WC. This word, a supposed abbreviation of the Americanish word 'water closet,' was preferred, for some reason, to words with the same meaning in our language such as *kenef*, *abdesthane*, *ayakyolu* and even the French-derived *tuvalet*. (If I said 'for some reason,' in a manner of speaking it is actually quite a fitting way to describe the bathroom habits of a generation of American hamburger-eaters!)

Tracing the infiltration of the letter *w* to its purported ignominious beginnings as a borrowed euphemism for "lavatory," Şahin seems to imply that the letter is as unmentionable in polite society as the apparatus itself. Moreover, Şahin rejects the very need for such a term, pointing to the prior existence of four perfectly acceptable alternatives to *WC* "with the same meaning in our language"--*kenef*, *abdesthane*, *ayakyolu*, and *tuvalet*. Only one of the "native" alternatives Şahin identifies (*ayakyolu*) is actually of Turkish origin, yet this presents no impediment to his argument. Although he does single out *tuvalet* as a French derivation, Şahin makes no mention of the Persian

origins of *kenef* and *abdesthane*. It thus becomes clear that even among established foreign borrowings, a hierarchy of acceptability exists such that Persian and Arabic loanwords have been fully assimilated, while more recent loanwords of French origin remain marked, despite their spelling having been altered to reflect Turkish orthography. *WC*, meanwhile, remains on the outside of this paradigm--an utterly and irretrievably foreign element--largely, it seems, because the presence of the letter *w* prevents it from being "Turkified."

Although such selectivity in appraising foreign elements may appear arbitrary or even contradictory to the purist agenda, it can largely be explained through reference to shifts in prevailing geopolitical conditions that have transformed the ways in which external linguistic threats are perceived and evaluated. According to Weinstein:

> Purists know the enemy very well. As a result there is probably no such thing as absolute purism--only purism with respect to the challenging language. Reportedly, Catalan purists who struggle against Castilian influence accept English borrowings. Greek defenders of Katarevusa could accept the French word for "tea" in order to remove the Demotic word for it (c.f. Mirambel 1964:415). What should be called 'selective closure' is also at work among French purifiers who do not object to the study of German and are increasingly willing to accept some contributions to the French lexicon from Low varieties of language as long as French dominance is assured (1989:54).

In essence, the foreign language perceived as posing the most significant threat to purists resolved to protect their native tongue is largely determined by the relative standing of the languages, which, in turn, relies largely on the comparative prestige of the respective societies with which the languages are associated within local and/or

international hierarchies. Thus, citing Wexler (1974), Weinstein suggests that the "apparent inconsistency" behind the selective treatment of foreign loanwords is best explained by non-linguistic factors. Annamalai further argues that although "factors which lead to purism may be, theoretically, internal or external to the language…. [m]ore important than any structural consideration is the attitudes of speakers toward native and non-native elements… [as] determined by socio-cultural, political, and historical factors which are external to the language" (1979:36).

Returning, then, to Şahin's article, it becomes clear that not only is English perceived to pose the greatest threat to the Turkish language, but that general apprehension over the incursion of loanwords, followed by loanletters, is rooted in larger sociopolitical concerns over American global hegemony and cultural imperialism. Şahin himself suggests this link by rhetorically tying the borrowed term *WC*, on the coattails of which he accuses the letter *w* of having first entered Turkey, to American linguistic imperialism through his claim that it represents the "Americanese"[111] abbreviation for "water closet." This is, in fact, a misapprehension or misrepresentation in that the term *WC* originated in Britain and enjoys continued widespread usage across Europe, while its use in the U.S. is largely restricted to plumbing manuals and would likely cause the average American to scratch his head perplexedly.

Nonetheless, this distinction matters little, for few of Şahin's readers would be the wiser and the association thus made accords well with increasing anti-American

[111] Very rarely is the dialect of English spoken in the U.S. given status as a language unto itself (e.g., Americanese), but Şahin appears to want there to be no mistake about the main purveyor of global linguistic hegemony in the modern era.

sentiment within the general populace. Şahin further reinforces the association by suggesting that the letter *w* is actually quite suited to describing the presumably boorish "bathroom habits of a generation of American hamburger eaters" ("*Amerikan hamburgeri yiyen bir neslin WC'ye gitmesi*"). In so doing, he deftly links the pertinacious, interloping loanletter to prevailing anti-globalization discourses which decry the McDonaldization of Turkey, employing culture specific social capital to imply that the letter *w* sits as poorly on the Turkish tongue as American fast food does on the Turkish palate.

REPELLING THE "INFIDEL" VERSUS WELCOMING THE "FOREIGNER": DIVERGENT APPROACHES TO THE FOREIGN LOANLETTER CONUNDRUM

Precisely by virtue of the tripartite ideological link between language, its graphic manifestation, and the social world, however, purist ideologies, no matter how carefully couched in linguistic terms, are vulnerable to criticism that they are, at heart, deeply politically motivated. Indeed, one of the earliest responses to Şahin's editorial on the Turkoloji-L listserver challenged his description of the letter *w* as "pertinacious" ("*sırnaşık"*) and his treatment of it as a foreign imposter. Claiming to have observed the tendency to denigrate foreign orthographic borrowings in earlier posts to the list, Turcologist Vera Tigris professes being at a loss for understanding why such letters as *x*, *q*, and *w* should be the cause of such consternation. Questioning the validity of branding these letters "foreign" implicit in labeling them "letters not found in our alphabet" ("*alfabemiz bulunmayan harflar*"), she argues that every one of the characters of the

Latin alphabet were "foreign" ("yabancı") to Turkish prior to the alphabet reform of 1928. She writes:

> A, B, C... Z nasil latin alfabesinin harfleri ve Türkiye'de harf devriminden önce yabanci idilerse X, Q, W da öyle idiler. Ne oldu ki ilk saydiklarim Türkiye'nin mali oldu da X, Q, W "gavur" kaldilar….
>
> Just as A, B, C… Z were letters of the latin alphabet and were foreign before the Turkish alphabet reform, so too were X, Q, W. For whatever reason, the former were appropriated by Turkey while X, Q, W remained "infidel"…

If all letters of the modern Turkish alphabet, in spite of their canonization over the past seventy years, were borrowed, Tigris thus suggests, what then could be the justification behind singling out the letters *x*, *q*, and *w*? Arguing that their omission from the Turkish alphabet devised and ratified in 1928 does not constitute sufficient cause, Tigris implies that much deeper issues of social perception are at play, describing the Turkish reaction to the three disputed letters by reference to the term *gâvur*--an Arabic-derived word for "foreign," implying "non-Muslim," "infidel," even "godless," which, while often used in casual reference to Westerners, is generally recognized as rude and eschewed in polite society in favor of the more neutral Farsi-derived construction *yabancı*. From a semantic perspective, Tigris' use of *gâvur* is highly charged, implying that she believes the Turkish reaction against the three letters to be governed by historical animosities, contemporary geo-politics, and sentiment rather than sound linguistic considerations. This opinion is echoed at the conclusion of her posting in which she suggests that the adoption of loanletters ought to be rationally evaluated based on the

strength of their usefulness to the language rather than dismissed out of hand in an emotional, knee-jerk reaction to that which is foreign: "In my opinion, it is necessary to be rational and put the principle of usefulness to the fore. This is my humble view" ("*Bence soguk kanlı olunmalı ve yararlılık prensibi öne alınmalıdır. Nacizane görüsüm budur.*").

Although in the minority, Tigris' perspective does find support among fellow Turkoloji-L members and contributors to the debates, including translator and proprietor of an independent publishing house dedicated to works on Turkish and the Turkic languages, Tevfik Turan, who, in a response to Şahin's article and subsequent commentary from Turkoloji-L members joins Tigris in taking issue with what he perceives to be the xenophobic reaction to foreign loanletters on display in contributions to the listserver. In a dispatch posted two days after Tigris', Turan equates blatant rejectionism of loanletters with that of loanwords and ascribes both impulses to a deep-seated Turkish fear of that which is foreign or, more precisely, the "foreignness within that which is foreign" (*"yabancı olanı yabancılığı içinde"*), for which he also uses the Turkish phrase "*yabancı korkusu*" ("fear of the foreign/foreigner") and the loanword "xenophobia," spelled according to English rather than Turkish orthography. He writes:

> Bizim asıl derdimiz, bana öyle geliyor ki, yabancı olanı yabancılığı içinde kabullenemeyişimiz. Bu kapsamlı ve derin yabancı korkusu özellikle dilde akıl almaz aşırılıklara varabiliyor….
>
> What our actual problem is, it seems to me, is that we seem unable to accept the foreignness within that which is foreign. This deep and encompassing fear of the foreign/foreigner is especially able

	to reach excessiveness beyond rationality with regard to language….
Bu xenophobia havası içinde, bazı harflerin artık es geçilemez biçimde hayatımıza girmesi de, beraberinde bir saldırı karşısında olduğumuz algısını getiriyor.	Within this climate of xenophobia, the entry of some letters that cannot be ignored into our lives creates the impression that we are together up against an assault.

Turan goes on to critique the overzealous, and to his mind misplaced, purist impulses of the original Turkish language reformers who, in the name of restoring the language of the folk, expelled countless foreign loanwords employed regularly by the Turkish folk themselves (e.g., *mekteb*, *hayat*, *Allah*, *tabiat*). He furthermore reserves a good measure of criticism for contemporary Turkish writers, living in their ivory towers, for routinely engaging in all manner of contortions in order to avoid using such commonplace Arabic loanwords, even going so far as to place contrived neologisms in the mouths of the characters in their novels: "There are no verbal gymnastics to which our writers and translators will not resort to avoid using words with the faintest whiff of Arabic. And furthermore, they cram such neologisms dreamt up at the work table into the mouths of the characters who speak in their stories and novels." ("*Yazarlarımız, çevirmenlerimiz biraz Arapça kokan kelimeleri kullanmamak için yapılmadık cambazlık bırakmıyorlar. Üstelik bir de, masa başında geliştirdikleri yeni sunîliklerini hikâyelerinde, romanlarında konuşan kişilerin ağzına da oturtuyorlar.*").

Such artificial use of language, Turan argues, has little resonance among the Turkish populace; rather it is Turkish intellectuals who make much ado over nothing in

their drive to maintain the mythologized linguistic purism of the imagined Turkish folk: "And the strange side of this business is that intellectuals are far more populist on this topic than even the people themselves: While he who writes *www* on the minibus, knowing that that letter is not found in the Turkish alphabet, is not troubled by its foreignness, those who claim to represent the superstructure of language are carried away with foreboding that there is a "problem" in the populace." ("*Işin garip bir tarafı da, aydının bu konuda gene halktan fazla halkçı olması: Minibüsüne www yazan, o harfin Türk alfabesinde olmadığını bildiği halde, yabancılığını dert etmezken, dilin üstyapısını temsil etme iddiasında olanlar bir kere daha, tabanda bir "sorun" olduğu vehmine kapılıyor.*")

Welcoming the "foreigner" (*yabancı*) to their midst, Turan suggests a simple and pragmatic approach toward the loanletters that involves openly acknowledging their foreignness and accepting their practical uses rather than banning them solely on the basis of misguided idealism and trenchant xenophobia. In Turan's view, the process of familiarization with English loanletters arising from regular use will furthermore serve to prevent the average Turk from developing "inferiority complexes" (for which he uses the Turkish calque *"aşağılık kompleksleri"*) by derailing those within the society who employ foreign letters in Turkish to flaunt their knowledge of foreign languages and display a purported air of worldliness and, hence, superiority. He writes:

Yabancıyı niçin şöyle karşılamayalım, anlamıyorum:	I don't understand why I shouldn't be able to greet the foreigner thus:

"Ben senin yabancı olduğunu biliyor ve seni, benden farklı olduğunu gözardı etmeden, yabancı kimliğin içinde algılıyorum. Işime yarıyorsun, seni kullanıyorum, pratik tarafın hoşuma gidiyor; bunun için de sana, yabancı olduğundan gocunmadan ve sana muhtaç olduğumu vehmedip aşağılık kompleksleri filan edinmeden, kocaman bir evet diyorum. Seni kullanarak dildaşlarına böbürlenenlere, yabancı dil bildiğini göstererek üstünlük taslayanlara, yani seni kasıtlı veya kasıtsız olarak kötüye kullanmaya çalışanlara karşı çıkıyorum ve bu kötüye kullanmaların ülkede yabancı bilgisi geliştikçe azalacağına inanıyorum. Aramıza hoş geldin, yabancı!"	"I know that you are foreign, and without overlooking your being different from me, I perceive you within your foreign identity. You are useful to me, I use you, I like your practical side, and because of this, without being resentful of your foreignness and without fearing my need for you and developing inferiority complexes or whatnot, I say a huge yes. Using you, I will come out against those who put on airs for fellow language colleagues, against those who pretend to superiority by making a show of their knowing a foreign language, in other words, against those who, whether purposely or not, try to misuse you, and I believe that such misuse will decrease as foreign knowledge develops in our country. Welcome to our midst, stranger!

For many contributors, however, foreign orthographic influence and the concomitant fear of cultural annihilation remained an issue of great emotional import, not subject to rational assessments of practicality. Thus, while Şahin's efforts to depict orthographic borrowings as foreign met with objections from certain quarters for being alarmist, xenophobic, and irrational, what ultimately proved most controversial about his op-ed was the seemingly offhand suggestion that such loanletters be considered for adoption into the Turkish alphabet: "In that case, what shall we do? Shall we just ignore the problem or has the time come for the letter "w" to take its place in our alphabet?" ("*Öyleyse ne yapacagiz? Sorunu görmezden mi gelecegiz? Yoksa 'w' harfini alfabemize almanin zamani geldi mi*?").

Indeed, what ultimately prompted other editorialists to pick up the thread of Şahin's argument, the TDK to weigh in, the international news to take note, and members of Turkoloji-L to take the issue under debate--was not Şahin's reanimation of time-honored discourses of linguistic purism in aid of addressing foreign-sourced orthographic innovation, nor even his deliberate association of the letter *w* with American cultural imperialism, but rather his suggestion that orthographic borrowings may have reached a watershed point where accommodation offered a viable alternative to expulsion.

This simple but radical suggestion was an alien concept to orthographic innovators who embraced the constantly evolving, or "lived," nature of language but had hitherto largely pursued their own orthographic and linguistic practices as a marker of social identity without seeking revision of official linguistic policy. Moreover, it was a complete anathema to purists, who had long fought foreign language influence and now feared the opening of a second front in the battle over linguistic purism, as well as nationalists, who were alarmed by the specter of linguistic imperialism and a loss of Turkish cultural integrity. Drawing on arguments ranging from legal to linguistic, educational to social, members of Turkoloji-L wrote in to defend the sanctity of the Turkish alphabet and, by extension, Turkish linguistic and cultural sovereignty.

FROM LEGAL TO LINGUISTIC: PROTECTING AND PRESERVING THE TURKISH ALPHABET

The responses to the orthographic challenge posed by Şahin initially centered on bolstering the authority of the existing Turkish alphabet from both a legal and linguistic perspective and linking it to specific social capital within the society. Early contributors to the debate thus marshaled the dual discourses of state power and quasi-state authority, invoking the constitutional provision setting forth and safeguarding the Turkish alphabet and referencing Turkish Language Society policies and publications. For example, in an early posting to the listserver, professor of literature Erdoğan Boz writes:

> Bilindiği gibi Türk alfabesi, Latin harfleri esas alınarak 1.IX.1928 gün ve 1353 sayılı kanunla tespit ve kabul edilmiştir. Bu kanuna göre de alfabemizde 8'i ünlü 21'i ünsüz 29 harf vardır.
>
> Türkçe asıllı kelimelerde bulunmayan ve Batı dillerinden dilimize giren kelimelerde karşılaştığımız Q, W ve X harfleri alfabemizde yer almamakla beraber TDK'nun çıkardığı Imlâ Kılavuzu'nda bu harflere temasla sözlük, dizin ve ansiklopedilerdeki sırası belirtilmiştir.
>
> As is known, the Turkish alphabet, taking the base of Latin letters, was established and approved on September 1, 1928 and with law number 1353. According to this law, there are 8 vowels, 21 consonants, 29 letters in our alphabet.
>
> The letters Q, W, and X--which are not found in words of Turkish origin, but are encountered in words that entered our language from Western languages--even though they are not included in our alphabet, their placement in dictionaries, indices, and encyclopedias is indicated in the Spelling Guide put out by the TDK.

While reaffirming the legal basis for the 29-character Turkish alphabet, Boz nonetheless goes on to remark that "alphabet is an ends not a means" ("*alfabe, amaç değil bir araçtır*") and echo Tigris' insistence that the decision of whether or not to adopt foreign loanletters into the Turkish alphabet should not be clouded by emotion: "In my opinion, by acting rationally and thinking soundly, we will come to a good result. Most often, however, our national sensitivities cause us to err in making the appropriate decisions." ("*Bence soğukkanlı davranarak ve sağlıklı düşünerek iyi bir sonuca varabiliriz. Milli duygusallığımız ise bizi çoğu kere isabetli kararlar almada yanıltmıştır.*")

The day after Boz's remarks were posted, the head of the Turkish Language Society, Şükrü Halûk Akalın, submitted an official statement concerning the society's position on Turkish orthographic conventions and the adoption of foreign loanletters. It read:

> Alfabemizi belirleyen 1353 sayılı yasada Q, X, W gibi harfler bulunmamaktadır. Bu ve benzeri harfler Türkçe sözlerde kullanılmamakta, ancak alıntı sözlerle karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Eski alıntılardaki bu sesler, Türkçede en yakın ses ve harfle karşılanmıştır. Bu tür sözleri alfabemizdeki harflerle kullanıyoruz: 'taxi' > taksi, 'quarz' > kuvars, 'wagon' > vagon...
>
> Ancak son yıllarda dilimize giren
>
> Letters such as Q, X, and W are not found in law number 1353 which defines our alphabet. These and similar letters are not used in Turkish words, only in loanwords do they confront us. Such sounds found in old loanwords, were represented by the closest sound and letter in Turkish. We use these types of words with letters from our alphabet: 'taxi' > '*taksi*,' 'quarz' [sic] > '*kuvars*,' 'wagon' > '*vagon*'…

‘show’ gibi kimi yabancı sözlerde bu harflerin kullanımı gündeme gelmiştir. TDK olarak, bu sözlerin Türkçelerinin kullanılmasının daha doğru olacağına inanıyoruz.	However, in recent years, use of these letters in some foreign words that have entered our language, such as ‘show,’ has come under discussion. As the TDK, we believe that usage of the Turkish form of these words would be more correct.

Although its long history suggests a preference for coining Turkish lexical alternatives over adopting foreign loanwords, the Turkish Language Society seems to acknowledge in this official position paper the tremendous challenge of sustaining absolute linguist purism and indicate a willingness to accept foreign borrowings on the condition that they are transliterated into the existing Turkish alphabet. The gist of the Society’s statement was thus to reiterate the legal status of the Turkish alphabet and assert the TDK’s position that transliterating foreign loanwords using the 29 existing letters, although not ideal, was nonetheless preferable to adopting foreign loanletters.

While coming out strongly against spelling foreign loanwords with foreign loanletters, however, the TDK statement ends by arguing the far greater importance of reversing the more troubling recent trend toward spelling Turkish or Turkified words with foreign letters or letter combinations (e.g., writing *Taksim* as “Taxim” or *yemiş* as “yemish”). Thus, while the TDK appears to acknowledge that language is not inviolable and that loanwords will ultimately wend their way into Turkish, it stalwartly advocates retaining the sanctity of the alphabet--arguably a more circumscribed, and hence more

easily defensible, subject than the language itself--with the entailed understanding, read injunction, that foreign loanwords be subject to Turkification.

Legalistic arguments in favor of banning loanletters from the alphabet being naturally limited, they soon gave way to linguistic arguments, such as that advanced in a 20 November posting by Adnan Atabek. Reminding fellow Turkoloji-L members of the mathematical logic behind the one-to-one relationship between sound and symbol upon which the Turkish alphabet is based, Atabek focuses on the letter *x*, arguing against its adoption on the grounds that it violates this fundamental principle by representing a combination of two separate phonemes, [k] and [s]. He writes:

> Turkce'de 'x' isteyen beyler, eger, 'kisa' sozcugunu 'xa' biciminde daha ekonomik yazmak için istiyorlarsa, kendilerine bir hatirlatmam var: Turkce, fonetik ve alfabetik bir dildir. Bir ses matematigidir. Her 'ses'in bir 'im'i vardır. Bati dilleri ise yarı-alfabetik dillerdir. Alfabetik-ideogramatik dillerdir. Bu da, bircok dilden soz ve kural aldiklarindan, ses-im ilisiginin yitmesi sonucudur. Yani 'x'e iki ses yuklemek ileri degil geri vitestir.
>
> For those gentlemen who want an ‘x’ in Turkish, if they want it in order to write the word ‘kisa’ in the more economic form ‘xa,’ I have one reminder for them: Turkish is a phonetic and alphabetic language. A sound is mathematical. Each ‘sound’ has a ‘symbol.’ Western languages, however, are half-alphabetic languages. They are alphabetic-ideogrammatic languages. For this reason, the loss of relation between sound and symbol is the result of the vocabulary and grammatical rules taken from a number of other languages. In other words, loading the ‘x’ with two sounds is backward not forward gear.

Şahin also addresses the sanctity of the sound/symbol relationship in two follow-on opinion pieces posted to Turkoloji-L on the 24th and 25th of November respectively. In the first article, while acknowledging the fundamental importance of the one-to-one phoneme/grapheme correlation to Turkish orthography, Şahin nonetheless notes that the fractured nature of the contemporary linguistic marketplace lends itself to a shift in orthographic practice away from such fundamentals such that the letter *c*--which represents the phoneme /dʒ/ in Turkish--is often pronounced /s/ or /k/ as it is in many foreign languages. As a result, foreign loanwords such as *center* and *café,* which were once rendered *sentır* and *kafe* in keeping with Turkish orthographic rules, are now spelled according to the original English or French. By contrast, instances of /dʒ/ being represented in native Turkish words by the letter combination *dj* instead of *c* are becoming ever more common. He writes:

> 1928'de kabul ettigimiz yeni Türk alfabesinin fonetik bir alfabe oldugunu hakli bir övünçle söylüyoruz. Fonetik alfabe demek, her harfin tek bir sesi karsiladigi alfabe demektir. Ancak son zamanlarda bakiyoruz o tek harf çok farkli biçimlerde okunabiliyor. Örnegin Cumhuriyet kelimesinin en basinda bulunan 'C' harfi, 'cafe'de 'k', 'center'da 's' olarak da seslendiriliyor.
>
> Dün karsi komsum Hakki Devrim de degindi: Adam firmasinin adini 'Eskidji' koymus ama 'Eskici' olarak
>
> With justified pride, we say that the new Turkish alphabet adopted in 1928 is a phonetic alphabet. To say a phonetic alphabet, is to say an alphabet in which every letter represents just one sound. However, lately we see that this single letter can be read in many different ways. For example, the letter 'C' found at the beginning of the word *Cumhuriyet* [republic] can be pronounced both in 'café' as 'k' and in 'center' as 's'.
>
> Yesterday, even my cross-the-way neighbor, Hakki Devrim, touched

okunmasini istiyor. 'dj' ne zamandan beri yeniden 'c' olarak okunuyor?	on it: A man gave his company the name ‘Eskidji’ but wants it to be read as ‘Eskici.’ Since when is ‘dj’ read as the new ‘c’?

In the second article, Şahin reviews some of the recommendations he received from readers concerning adoption of foreign loanletters and the Turkish alphabet in general, with a critical eye toward suggestions that violate the phonetic logic of the Turkish alphabet. He writes:

En radikal fikir, internet ortamina ve küresellesmeye uyum saglamak için yeni harfler almanin yani sira, s, ç, ö, ü, g gibi harfleri alfabemizden atma önerisiydi. Bu görüse göre, örnegin s harfi sh ile karsilanabilir, ö harfi karsiliginda oe harfleri kullanilabilirdi. O zaman örnegin yönetmen Serif Gören adini Sherif Goeren olarak yazacakti... Yeni Türk alfabesinin her sesi tek harfle karsilamaya çalisan fonetik mantigi ile çelisen bir öneriydi bu.	The most radical idea was a suggestion to throw letters such as ş, ç, ö, ü, and ğ out of our alphabet in order to accept new letters and so harmonize with the internet environment and globalization. According to this view, the letter ş, for example, could be represented by sh and the letters oe could be used to represent the letter ö. In that case, for example, the name of director Şerif Gören could be written as Sherif Goeren… What this is is a suggestion that contradicts the operant phonetic logic of the Turkish alphabet that every sound is represented by a single letter.

Objections such as those voiced by Atabek and Şahin suggest that for some contributors, the adoption of foreign loanletters raised concerns not simply because they represent foreign sounds and external influence, but because they constitute a threat to the

fundamental cultural logic of Turkey's orthographic system, thereby offering further evidence of the notion that concerns over orthographic purity are of a deeper-level ideological order that transcends issues of sound-symbol representation to speak directly to fundamental cultural precepts within the society.

This same notion of a one-to-one phoneme-to-grapheme relationship led other contributors to not only reject the adoption of foreign loanletters but also take the opportunity to contest the inclusion of certain letters in the original alphabet. For example, listserver member Turhan Tisinli's recommendation against adopting the letter *x* into the Turkish alphabet in a 22 November posting is accompanied by a critique of the letter *ğ* and a suggestion that the letter *j* ought to be removed from the current Turkish alphabet. He writes:

> Benim Turk abecesiyle[112] iki sorunum var. Birincisi 'j' harfidir, ikincisi de yumusak g sesi icin ozel bir harf bulunmasidir. 'X' Turkceye ne kadar yabanci ise, 'j' de o kadar yabancidir. Bu harf yalniz yabanci kokenli sozcuklerde kullanilmaktadir , ozel olarak Fransizca kokenlilerinde. 'ks'
>
> I have two problems with the Turkish alphabet. The first is the letter 'j,' the second is the existence of a special letter for the sound represented by the soft g. However foreign 'x' is to Turkish, 'j' is just as foreign. This letter is only used in words with foreign roots, especially those with French roots.

[112] In his contributions to the online discussion, Tisinli appears to have taken especial care to avoid using foreign lexical borrowings of any provenance, going so far as to use less common Turkish variants rather than the well-integrated English, Arabic, and Persian loanwords more commonly employed (i.e., *abece* vs. *alfabe*, *sorun* vs. *problem*, *sözcük* vs. *kelime*, *-e dek* vs. *–e kadar*, *orneğin* vs. *mesala*, *ya da* vs. *veya*, *yeğlemek* vs. *tercih etmek*). I have highlighted such lexical choices in red characters, as his seemingly deliberate preference for "native" terms works to reinforce his argument against even long-accepted and well-integrated foreign linguistic influence.

degerinde olan ‘x’i almayalim, ‘j’den de kurtulalim. ‘J’li sozcukleri Turkcelestirene dek onlardaki ‘j’lerin yerine ‘c’ kullanabiliriz, ornegin jeoloji >> “ceoloci” >> “ceyoloci” (ya da ciyoloci) (tabi “yerbilim”i yeglemeliyiz).	Let us not accept the ‘x’ with the value “ks,” let us be rescued from the ‘j’. Until words with ‘j’ are Turkified, we can use ‘c’ in place of ‘j,’ for example *jeoloji* >> “*ceoloci*” >> “*ceyoloci*” (or even *ciyoloci*) (of course, we must prefer “earth science”).

Within the context of debate over the acceptance of the foreign loanletters *x*, *q*, and *w*, Tisinli’s focus on perceived flaws in the existing alphabet seems incongruous, but scholars of language purism note that such zeal is not uncommon. Although advocates of linguistic purism tend to focus on the languages--or, by extension, the orthographic elements--currently perceived as threatening and hence targeted as foreign, Annamalai (1979) notes the existence of a complementary tendency toward rehashing the past. Thus, when confronting linguistic or orthographic pressure, purists become both prospective and retrospective, seeking to not only prevent future contamination but also undo past foreign-sourced linguistic influence. Within this context, however, retrospective review, rather than serving to undermine existing linguistic or orthographic systems, seeks to reinforce their authority by rendering their underlying logic sound, flawless, and hence unassailable. Thus, for Tisinli, the inclusion of certain characters in the original Turkish alphabet does not grant them immunity from contemporary criticism. Focusing on the letter *j*, Tisinli notes that the words in which it appears are uniformly

foreign borrowings[113] and suggests that continued use of the letter serves only to prevent such loanwords from being fully Turkified, in much the same way retention of the Arabic *kāf* (voiceless velar plosive) in 1928 would have complicated the elimination or assimilation of Arabic and Persian borrowings.

Given Atatürk's original admonition against admitting letters for the sole purpose of representing foreign words which had "infiltrated" Turkish (c.f., chapter five), it is reasonable to ask how the letter *j* came to have been included in the Turkish alphabet of 1928 in the first place. A look at the contemporaneous Turkic world provides one answer insofar as the Latin-based alphabet of Azerbaijan adopted in 1922 included both a letter representing the phoneme /ʒ/--although the letter in question was *z*, not *j*--as well as the letter *j*--although that letter represented the phoneme /j/ not /ʒ/. Another answer can be found through an examination of the history of Turkish orthographic reform which suggests that this exception to the principle of a one-to-one, sound-to-symbol relationship is best explained by recalling Weinstein's (1989) observation that language purists know the enemy well. At the time of the Turkish alphabet reform, Atatürk and his advisors were chiefly concerned with omitting letters that represented non-native sounds prevalent in Arabic and Persian borrowings, as these languages then constituted the greatest threat to the Turkish language, and the retention of such characters would have allowed loanwords to resist being eliminated or even Turkified. Nearly seventy-five years later,

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[113] The lack of any entries beginning with the letter *j* in İsmet Zeki Eyuboğlu's *Türk Dilinin Etimoloji Sözlüğü* (*Etymology Dictionary of the Turkish Language*) published in 1988 is telling of the fact that all words beginning with the letter *j* are loanwords.

Western languages have overtaken those from the East as the primary source for foreign borrowings, so it is only natural that a letter whose function is limited to Western loanwords would come under the scrutiny of a new generation of purists.

After laying forth his ideological objections to the inclusion of the letter *j* in the Turkish alphabet, Tisinli turns to the practical, arguing that the Turkish letter *c (*/dʒ/), which represents a sound sufficiently close to that represented by the foreign letter *j* (/ʒ/) as to be virtually interchangeable to Turkish speakers, renders the latter superfluous. Although Tisinli goes on to offer a variety of alternate Turkish spellings for loanwords containing the letter *j*, he ultimately concludes by emphasizing that the need to find a Turkish proxy for *j* would be eliminated altogether were Turkish equivalents to be created for foreign borrowings, thereby reaffirming the enduring power of the hegemonic belief that foreign letters enter the language via loanwords.

It is important to emphasize that Tisinli's objection to the letter *j* was not simply that it was "foreign" to Turkish, but that it was used primarily in loanwords of Western origin and offered no salient distinction from the Turkish letter it most closely approximated. Seen in this light, Tisinli's criticism of *j* and recommendation that it be removed can be understood as a valiant effort to protect the fundamental linguistic logic of the Turkish alphabet even as it shone a harsh light on an accepted constituent character. In this sense, Tisinli's justification for removing the letter *j* from the Turkish alphabet echoes arguments raised in support of barring adoption of the loanletters *q*, *x*, and *w*--namely protection of the purity of the Turkish alphabet and, by extension, the integrity of the language itself.

Thus, while some contributors to the debate define the orthographic ideal as the 29-letter alphabet ratified on 1 November 1928 by Law 1353 "On the Adoption and Application of the Turkish Alphabet" and retained along with seven other so-called reform laws in the 1982 Turkish Constitution, Tisinli suggests a new ideal--one in which all letters of the alphabet are appraised in accordance with their merits and retained or eliminated on the basis of their ability to represent a pure linguistic standard. In essence, then, Tisinli's posting suggests that the foreign character of a letter rests not with the length of its tenure in the Turkish alphabet, but rather its clear adherence to the fundamental logic of Turkish orthography. As such, his advocacy against continued inclusion of certain original, but, in his estimation, unnecessary, letters offers a clear counterpart to Tigris' recommendation that letters ought not to be excluded from the Turkish alphabet based solely on their original omission.

EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIOCULTURAL RAMIFICATIONS: FOREIGN LOANLETTERS AS AGENTS OF WESTERN IMPERIALISM AND CULTURAL ANNIHILATION

Although legal and linguistic arguments continue to be raised throughout the debate, the bulk of the discussion ultimately turns to the perceived social ramifications of adopting foreign loanletters into the Turkish alphabet. Picking up from Şahin's initial criticisms concerning the invasiveness of foreign loanletters to critique his suggestion that they be preemptively adopted into the Turkish alphabet, later contributors are even more direct in linking foreign loanletters to the threat of cultural imperialism and the loss

of both language and culture. Alper Beşe, for one, takes Şahin himself to task in an email rejoinder submitted to Turkoloji-L on 24 November for suggesting that in order to participate in the increasingly technologically interlinked global environment, Turks will find it ever more necessary to employ foreign loanletters. Quoting from Şahin's "Our Alphabet and Realities" article: "Like it or not, we will be forced to use these letters. This will be even more the case in this era of globalization driven by American cultural hegemony." (*"Bu harfleri, istesek de istemesek de, kullanmak zorunda birakiliyoruz. Küresellesme döneminde Amerikan kültürünün egemenligi sürdükçe daha da birakilacagiz"*), Beşe responds by first questioning whether the future "realities" Şahin paints are inevitable and then offers the prospect of an even bleaker future should foreign loanletters be adopted into the Turkish alphabet on the basis of such spurious justifications.

> Neden [alinti harflar] kullanmak zorunda bırakılalım? Başka dillerde konuşurken ve yazarken tabii ki bu harfleri kullanacağız ama bu harfler neden böyle bir gerekçeyle dilimize girsin? Siz bir yandan anaokulundan üniversiteye kadar bütün eğitim kurumlarınızdan Türkçe'yi kovacaksınız, bir yandan Türkçe kelimeleri Ingilizce imlasıyla yazacaksınız (yemish vs.) bir yandan da dilimizde karşılığı olmayan harfleri (Kaynak: Şükrü Haluk Akalın'ın Haluk Şahin'e
>
> Why should we be left with the need to use [foreign loanletters]? We will, of course, use these letters when speaking and writing in other languages, but why let these letters enter our language with such a justification? On the one hand you'll drive Turkish out of educational institutions from primary school to university, on the other hand you'll write Turkish words with the English orthography (yemish, etc.), and on the other hand you will try to stick letters that

cevabı) sırf komplekslerinizden[114] dolayı alfabemize sokmaya çalışacaksınız.	have no representation in our language (Source: Şükrü Halûk Akalın's answer to Haluk Şahin) into our language purely because of your complexes.

Beşe's particular disquiet with the effect of foreign loanletters on cultural continuity, particularly within the schools where children are formally enculturated, echoes concerns expressed in the TDK's official policy statement of the projected pedagogical confusion that would undoubtedly result from accepting foreign letters into the Turkish alphabet. While the TDK opined that the use of foreign letters for internet addresses and the personal names of foreigners presented no problem as these letters already existed on a standard keyboard, it abjured adopting them into the alphabet arguing that there were no Turkish words containing these letters that could highlighted in aid of teaching children their ABCs. In the words of the TDK: "When these letters are accepted into the alphabet, which words will you present to teach the letters in question to our children to whom we teach reading in the first grade of primary school?" The statement continues: "Such a practice accomplishes nothing other than increasing foreign elements in the language" ("*Bu harfler alfabeye alındığında ilkokulda birinci sınıfta yazıyı öğrettiğimiz çocuklarımıza söz konusu harfleri hangi sözleri örnek göstererek öğreteceksiniz? Böyle bir uygulama, dildeki yabancı ögeleri artırmaktan başka bir işe*

[114] In this and subsequent excerpts, I will highlight English loanwords in blue characters in an effort to demonstrate the degree to which foreign lexical borrowings pervade daily spoken Turkish. It is particularly ironic to note the use of such loanwords within the context of a discussion over the increasing prevalence of foreign loanletters and their purported link to foreign lexical borrowings.

yaramaz"). While it might be argued that foreign loanwords, given their abundance and widespread acceptance, could easily be employed to teach the letters *q*, *x*, and *w*, to institute such a pedagogical practice would mean honoring the spelling conventions of the originating languages, which ultimately would not only undermine the TDK's policy of spelling loanwords with the closest Turkish letters but also reinforce the practice of lexical borrowing that the TDK has long sought to stem.

Beşe goes on to warn fellow listserver members of the slippery slope toward linguistic and cultural subjugation that he perceives to be the inevitable result of adopting foreign elements into the Turkish alphabet. He writes:

> Türkçe, Türk milletinin bağımsızlık sembolüdür. Bugün okullardan Türkçeyi atanların, alfabeye bizim olmayan harfleri sokmaya kalkanların yarın bağımsızlığın diğer alameti olan bayrağımız üzerinde değişiklik yapmaya kalkmayacağının garantisini kim verebilir?
>
> Turkish is the symbol of independence of the Turkish nation. Who can guarantee that those who throw Turkish out of the schools and those who get it into their heads to stick letters we don't have into our alphabet today won't set out tomorrow to make changes to our flag, that other symbol of our independence?

Şahin, meanwhile, has found new grounds for concern over the threat posed to Turkish culture by the barrage of foreign loanletters to which the language is subjected. In an editorial for *Radikal* posted to the Turkoloji-L website on November 24, he returns to an issue mentioned in passing in his initial editorial--the pronunciation of loanletters--claiming that the infiltration of foreign letters, which he previously identified as the result

of linguistic imperialism, were themselves furthering forces of linguistic imperialism. He writes:

Amerikan Cumhurbaskani'nin adinin George W. Bush oldugunu biliyoruz. Haberciler Corc Dablyu Bus diye okuyorlar. Tabii, 'dablyu' (çift-u) dediklerinde Ingilizce konusmus oluyorlar.	We know that the American president's name is George W. Bush. Newscasters read it as George double-u Bush." Of course in saying 'dablyu' (double-u) they become virtual English speakers.
Kültürel hegemonyanin böylesi de az görülmüstür: Adamlar adlarini okuturken kendi dillerini konusturuyorlar.	Rarely has cultural hegemony such as this been seen. By having their names read, these folks force their own languages to be spoken.

The concern over the pernicious influence of foreign loanletters on cultural integrity Şahin expresses in this editorial surpasses even that of the TDK, which finds the use of loanletters in foreign names unproblematic: "There is no obstacle to the use of these letters in proper names of foreign origin" ("*Yabancı kaynaklı özel adlarda bu harflerin kullanılmasına engel yok*"). In contrast, Şahin suggests that the mere act of uttering the names of foreign letters in the original turns one into a speaker of the originating language and thus declares it an overt act of linguistic imperialism to impose foreign pronunciations on Turkish speakers. To Şahin's mind, moreover, it would seem that there is no question of speakers choosing to eschew foreign pronunciations--the cultural imperatives of American-led globalism compel their use. Here again, Şahin's focus is on the United States as the source of foreign adulteration of Turkish culture, and

his objections are once more couched in well-worn discourses of the evils of Western imperialism and cultural hegemony.

TO REJECT, TO BORROW, OR TO APPROPRIATE: THAT IS THE QUESTION

At this point, let us step back for a moment to examine the deeper ideological assumptions behind fears of cultural annihilation roused among Turkoloji-L members and within the larger society by proposals endorsing the adoption of the letters *q*, *x*, and *w* into the Turkish alphabet. First, it is essential to acknowledge a certain logic to the proposal. If what was so irksome about the loanletters *q*, *w*, and *x* was the distasteful matter of their being foreign, which left the average Turkish citizen unschooled in pronunciation or proper use, yet these characters nonetheless seemed to have taken hold, what then was to be done? While banning the use of foreign characters offered an obvious solution to the conundrum, it was unlikely to prove effective, given the inroads these loanletters had already made and the TDK's lack of legal authority to enforce such a ban. Alternatively, the letters could be deprived of the stature accorded them by their foreignness through incorporation into the Turkish alphabet. Although seemingly counterintuitive, this suggestion springs from the belief that foreign elements, once assimilated and normalized, lose their mystique and social cachet and hence their ability to influence or power to threaten.

Moreover, as contributor Tevfik Turan aptly points out, further support for this line of reasoning can be found in a longstanding Turkish tactic for subverting forced

assimilation and thereby diffusing the forces of cultural annihilation--namely the practice of *takiye*. *Takiye* is an Arabic-derived loanword meaning "hidden," "concealed," or "protected," which is generally associated with the 106th verse of the 16th Sura (Bee Sura or *Nahl Suresi*) of the Koran in which a Muslim is spared Allah's wrath for renouncing (*inkâr etmek*) his faith only if he is forced to do so and thus commits this sacrilege in bad faith, all the while preserving his true beliefs in his heart.[115] Extrapolated from its religious connotation, *takiye* is understood to be the act of subverting an imposed alien practice even as one professes outward adherence to it.

In the same posting in which he welcomes the "stranger" to their midst, Turan makes reference to the concept of *takiye* in characterizing the position of those who would entertain the notion of adopting foreign loanletters into the Turkish alphabet. He writes:

> Başlangıçta, WC'ler yoluyla giriştiği "sızma harekâtı" boyunca görmezden gelebildiğimiz, ama sonra "pıtrak gibi" çoğalarak minibüs yazılarına bile girerek "başımıza dert" olan, "sırnaşık" ve daha da ötesi, "kültür emperyalizmi" çağrışımlı w harfine
>
> In the beginning, we were able to ignore its "infiltration maneuvers" by way of WCs, but later, as it spread "like a burr" and appeared even in the writing on minibuses, crying out "troublesome," "pertinacious" and further yet "cultural imperialism" we say let's

[115] In English translation, the sura reads: "Those who disbelieve in God, after having acquired faith, and become fully content with disbelief, have incurred wrath from God. The only ones to be excused are those who are forced to profess disbelief, while their hearts are full of faith." Quoted from Quran. The Final Testament by Rashad Khalifa, found at http://www.godsmosque.org/html/quran/sura16.html, last accessed August 2, 2011.

artık bir "takiye" yapalım da alfabemize alalım, diyoruz; otuzuncu harfimiz olarak kafa kâğıdı alırsa, büyük kusuru olan yabancı statüsü de kendiliğinden kalkacaktır, düşüncesiyle.	engage in "takiye" already and accept the letter w into our alphabet, with the thought that if it takes out citizenship as our thirtieth letter, its greatly deficient foreign status will be spontaneously lifted.

Expressing skepticism that formal recognition would serve to neutralize foreign loanletters and holding firm to his belief that judicious borrowing was preferable, Turan ridicules those Turks who, upon realizing that turning a blind eye to the rampant proliferation of these letters across the Turkish landscape is no longer viable, take to decrying them as instruments of cultural imperialism, yet simultaneously propose adopting them into the alphabet in the misguided belief that by thus engaging in *takiye* they will be able to cleverly subvert the forces of global hegemony and reassert control over the renegade characters.

Despite the cultural logic supporting this line of reasoning, however, the numerous objections it provoked clearly signal the presence of equally deep-seated ideological assumptions that run counter to it, and as a result, mitigate the proposed solution's efficacy. Outside the digital confines of the Turkoloji-L orthographic debates, discussions with Turkish language professionals and interested laypersons that focused on the issues surrounding foreign orthographic influence ultimately revealed that, after the full gamut of linguistic-based arguments had been exhausted, the primary objection to adopting foreign letters was rooted in the fundamental belief that it is the colonized and the weak that are obliged to accept the cultural devices, linguistic or otherwise, of more powerful groups. That Turkey should be characterized as weak, even if part of a

deliberate illusion in the service of *takiye*, was wholly unpalatable to most Turks who, despite recent academic preoccupation[116] with the specter of a persistent inferiority complex manifest in the purported Turkish proclivity to place greater value on Western trappings than on their own traditions and forsake their own culture for Western alternatives, nonetheless generally view their society as the proud inheritor of an ancient civilization and powerful former empire and consider their alphabet, despite its relative recency and clear indebtedness to Western precursors, to be part of their cultural heritage. Indeed, Ataturk himself was careful to nurture this feeling of ownership over the Latin-based alphabet by always referring to it as the "Turkish alphabet" (Mango 1999:494).

As such, the suggestion that loanletters be adopted into the Turkish alphabet was widely perceived as tantamount to open acceptance of Turkey's second-class status in the global community. Nor could such an admission be softened by the suggestion that adopting the loanletters was merely an act of *takiye* or that to accept foreign letters was to expropriate them and thereby proactively preempt the forces of cultural imperialism that would impose them. In this sense, objections among Turkoloji-L contributors to Şahin's offhand proposal that foreign letters be adopted into the Turkish alphabet, even when expressed in legal and linguistic terms, ultimately revolved around the notion of Turkish national identity and sociopolitical standing within the changing world order.

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[116] Several contributors allude to the existence of a Turkish inferiority complex (*aşağılık kompleksleri*), including Tevfik Turan in the posting in which he welcomes the "stranger" to our midst.

TURKIC UNITY AND REGIONAL POWER: CENTRAL ASIA AND TURKEY'S NEW REGIONAL ROLE

In describing the emergence of movements for linguistic purism, Annamalai notes: "There are certain conditions some or all of which must be present for the puristic regulations to emerge in any language," primary among them a "social order [that] is undergoing change with power relations redefined" (1979:36). Insofar as social and political upheaval create an environment conducive to the emergence of linguistic purism, it naturally follows that support for language and alphabet reform first emerged in the waning days of the Ottoman Empire and was pursued in earnest during the early years of the Turkish republic. Nor should it come as any surprise that concerns over linguistic and orthographic purity have reemerged in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Until this point in the orthography debates, the arguments presented for and against the adoption of foreign loanletters have largely suggested a heightened concern with linguistic purism developed in response to the perceived threat of increasing Western influence within the context of a changing global order. As emerges in later contributions to the debates, however, it is the very nature of the new world order and its local significance to Turkish interests--in particular, the specific threats and opportunities it presents--that have complicated the pursuit of linguistic and orthographic purism within the country.

As discussed at greater length in previous chapters, the end of the Cold War precipitated a crisis in Turkey's foreign policy orientation, which had long been based on

its role as a "buffer state" between the Soviet Union and the West. Although Ankara moved quickly to reaffirm its relationship with the West and guarantee its continued international standing, the emergence of the United States as the sole remaining superpower also heightened fears within Turkey of American imperialism and increased Western influence--fears that are clearly reflected within the discourse of the online orthographic debates. Meanwhile, the fall of the Soviet Union had the additional effect of awakening long dormant aspirations within segments of the Turkish public that dreamt of laying claim to the country's envisioned destiny as the leader of a powerful union of Turkic peoples. It was during this period that the talk of "Turkic brotherhood" was common, the slogan "*Bir millet, iki devlet*" ("One people, two states") was conceived, and the *ortak dil* and *ortak alfabe* projects were pursued in earnest. Although at its height in the direct aftermath of the Soviet Union's collapse, the east-west push-pull of the post Cold War environment produced long-lasting ripple effects within Turkish society that could still be felt nearly a decade later in the discourse of the online orthography debates.

Thus, although the early focus of the debates was on the threat of Western--particularly American--imperialism, the course of discussion did inevitably turn to the potential effects of adopting loanletters on Turkey's relations with its eastern neighbors--namely the Turkic peoples of Central Asia and the Caucasus. Şahin first draws attention to this larger global aspect of Turkish orthographic politics in the post-Cold War era, by noting that many of the Latin-based alphabets adopted by the fledgling Turkic republics of Central Asia contain two of the same letters that had infiltrated Turkey from the West. In a 24 November editorial for *Radikal*, he writes:

Asya'daki Türk cumhuriyetlerinin bizim alfabemizi oldugu gibi kabul etmek yerine Latin harfleriyle yeni alfabeler olusturmalari isleri daha da karistirdi. Örnegin, yeni Azeri alfabesinde x harfi de var q harfi de.	The business of the Turkish republics in Asia creating new alphabets with Latin letters in place of accepting our alphabet as such is even more complicated. For example, there is a letter *x* and also a letter *q* in the new Azeri alphabet.

Within this expanded geolinguistic context, the question then becomes how the letters *q*, *x*, and *w* could be rejected as foreign elements and Western impositions if these very same letters: (1) represented sounds within non-standard Turkish (i.e., sounds accepted as being part of the historical and dialectical variation within Turkey), (2) had been adopted in the alphabets of many of the Central Asian republics to represent sounds still in active use in these related Turkic languages, and (3) were included in the *ortak alfabe* devised jointly by Turkish and Turkic language professionals to represent the fundamental sounds of the Turkic language family.

The implied cognitive dissonance is perhaps best understood through reference to the semiotic concept of the "floating signifier,"[117] in which a single signifier is understood to have multiple or shifting signifieds depending on time, place and the

[117] The concept of the "floating signifier," derived from semiotics, was first coined by Claude Lévi-Strauss in to reference a signifier that lacks a referent. In the glossary of his book *Semiotics: The Basics*, Daniel Chandler defines floating signifiers as "a signifier with a vague, highly variable, unspecifiable or non-existent signified. Such signifiers mean different things to different people: they may stand for many or even any signifieds; they may mean whatever their interpreters want them to mean" (2002:250). In a speech titled "Race: A Floating Signified?" Stuart Hall suggests that the concept of race operates as a floating signifier.

idiosyncrasies of individual perception. Thus to some participants in the online orthography debates the letters *x*, *q* and *w* are unabashed symbols of Western linguistic hegemony and the imperialist threat to "Turkishness," while to others, they mark the distinctive sound system of the Turkic languages and the as yet untapped potential for a greater sociocultural and geopolitical union of Turkic peoples. In this sense, juxtaposed against the numerous objections to adopting foreign loanletters that had infiltrated from the West, the revelation that some of the very same letters were in use among the Turkic peoples suggests slippage in the relationship between signifier and signified, which, enables divergent foreign policy ambitions to be imprinted on three unassuming orthographic characters.

On November 25, Turkoloji-L administrator Mehmet Tutuncu Turkoloji-L posted an article that appeared in that day's edition of the conservative newspaper *Yeni Şafak* which directly addresses the multifaceted character of the foreign loanletters. Entitled "Our Alphabet between Two Q's" ("*Alfabemiz iki Q arasinda*"), the article reports on an interview with the nationalist poet and writer Yavuz Bülent Bakiler regarding his views on orthography and the inclusion of *q*, *w*, and *x* in the Turkish alphabet. Bakiler, who rejects altering the alphabet to accommodate Western loanletters, nonetheless strongly recommends the adoption of two of the very same letters (*q* and *x*), as well as one or two other letters that figure in the contemporary Central Asian alphabets, as a means of strengthening both linguistic and social relations among the Turkic peoples. According to Bakiler:

Harf alalim ama...	Let's adopt the letters but…
Alfabemize Q, X, W alinsin mi alinmasin mi tartismasi sürerken, Türkçe üzerindeki tezleriyle dikkat çeken Yavuz Bülent Bakiler tartismaya çok farkli bir noktadan katildi. Bakiler'e göre de, alfabeye acilen yeni harfler eklenmeli, ama bu harfler tartismanin odagini olusturan ve Bati dillerinde kulanilan Q, W ve X harfleri degil. Türk alfabesinin bu harflere ihtiyaci bulunmadigini dile getiren Bakiler, buna karsin Türki Cumhuriyet'lerden Türkistan ve Azerbaycan'da kullanilan H (X), sert K (Q) ve kapali E harflerinin acilen Türk alfabesine de alinmasi gerektigini söyledi. "Biz kendi alfabemizi Bati standartlarina göre hazirlamak durumunda degiliz" diyen Bakiler, "Ancak Orta Asya'yla iliskilerimiz açisindan, mutlaka bu ülkelerle ortak bir alfabe üzerinde anlasmaliyiz" diye konustu.	While the discussion about accepting Q, W, and X into our alphabet has been ongoing, Yavuz Bülent Bakiler who pays attention to theses about Turkish, joined the discussion from a very different note. And according to Bakiler, the new letters that are needed in our alphabet should be adopted, but not the Q, W, and X letters that form the focus of these letter discussions and are used in the Western languages. Bakiler, who reflects that there is no need for these letters to be found in the Turkish alphabet, in contrast also said that there is an urgent necessity to adopt into the Turkish alphabet the letters H (X), hard K (Q), and closed E that are used in the Turkic republics in Turkistan and Azerbaijan. Bakiler, who says: "we are not in the situation of preparing our own alphabet according to Western standards," said that "from the perspective of relations with Central Asia, however, we must definitely agree upon a common alphabet with these countries.

By shifting the referent of the letters *q* and *x* from west to east, from the European languages to the Turkic languages, indeed by suggesting that they cannot even be considered the same letters insofar as they represent different sounds, Bakiler seeks to shift the conversation from Westernism to pan-Turkism and from imperialism to intraethnic coalition-building. In essence, he suggests that it is not the letters themselves

that are problematic, but rather the Turkish mentality surrounding them. In his view, rather than rejecting these letters on account of their association with the United States and Europe, Turkey should accept them in light of the potential they offer for affiliation with the Turkic republics of Central Asia and the Caucasus.

The article goes on to report Bakiler's conviction that powerful internal and external forces hostile to Turks ("*Türk'e düsman"*) fear the expanded influence Turkey would gain from closer affiliation with the Turkic republics and are actively seeking to contain or control the possibility:

Büyümemizden korkuyorlar	They fear our expansion
Türkiye'yi yönetenlerin Türk dünyasinin büyümesinden endise ettiklerini öne süren Bakiler, bu potansiyelin hem dis ülkeleri hem de bizzat ülke içindeki bir takim kesimleri korkuttugunu iddia etti. Bakiler, "Kültür degerlerimizin ortaya çikmasindan büyük paniye kapiliyorlar. Bizzat devletin içinde Türk'e düsman olan birtakim kimselerin cehaleti vardir. Bir takim kimseler 64 milyon nüfusu oldugumuzu düsünüyor. Anadolu Türklügü disinda 200 milyona yakin Türk toplugu daha var" diye konustu. Balzac'in "millet edebiyati olan bir toplumdur" ve Atatürk'ün "Cumhuriyet'in temeli kültürdür" sözlerine atifta bulunan Bakiler söyle konustu: "Eger millet edebiyati olan bir topluluksa, bizim kültürümüzün kaynagi Türkistan ve	Bakiler who puts forth the concern of those that run Turkey that the Turkic world will expand, insists that this potential frightens a number of factions both in foreign countries and within our own country. "They panic greatly that our cultural values will emerge. Within our own state, there is the ignorance of those people who are enemies of Turks. A number of those people think that we are 64 million in population. Outside of Anatolian Turkishness, there is also a nearly 200 million strong Turkish community," he said. Bakiler, who finds a relation between Balzac's words "that which has a national language is a society" and Ataturk's word "the foundation of a republic is culture," says the following: "If that which has a national

Azerbaycan topraklaridir. Bu ülkelerle masaya oturup alfabede alinmasi gereken harfleri almaliyiz. Büyük devlet olmaktan korkmamaliyiz. Baska devletlerin korkulari bizi korkutmamali, bizim gücümüz olmali. Alfabe birligine gitmis olsaydik, Türkiye'yi büyük aydinliklara çikartirdik.	literature is a society, the source of our culture is the lands of Turkistan and Azerbaijan. Let's sit down at the table with those countries and take those letters into our alphabet that need to be adopted. Let's not be afraid of being a big state. The fears of other states need not frighten us. We must be strong. Had we gone toward alphabet unity, we would have brought Turkey to great brightness.

Bakiler's support for adopting *q* and *x* into the Turkish alphabet is thus neither merely a pragmatic matter of enhancing communication with the Turkic peoples nor simply a symbolic gesture of embracing the nearly 200 million Turkic peoples who comprise the wider Turkic world, but rather a political injunction to Turkey to embrace its new role in the world order. Bakiler contends that it is incumbent on Turkey to eschew its protectionist stance and relish the notion of becoming a "big state" (*büyük devlet*) if it is to achieve its potential as regional powerhouse and expand Turkish standing and influence in the international community.

In this sense, Bakiler appears to be suggesting that the adoption of foreign loanletters into the Turkish alphabet--when done purposefully rather than by default and from a dominant rather than subaltern position--would serve to strengthen rather than diminish Turkish sovereignty. This perspective echoes views outside the bounds of the orthographic debates of advocates for the establishment of closer sociocultural and geopolitical ties between Turkey and the Turkic people who argued that a greater regional role would reinforce Turkey's strategic importance to the West, and hence serve

the dual purpose of strengthening the country's relative position in the international community and greatly diminishing Western influence such that it would no longer pose the same degree of threat to Turkish national interests.

Other contributors to the debate, however, reject Bakiler's conviction in the ability of the prospective loanletters to forge relations with the Turkic peoples and strengthen Turkey's position within the international community. In a long response posted on November 29, Özkan Öztekten, condemns references to the alphabets of the Turkic peoples as little more than a ruse to advance the adoption of the foreign loanletters. Summarizing such arguments, he writes:

> Üstelik bu harf konusu, sadece Batı dil(leri)ni ilgilendirmeyip, Türk lehçe ve şivelerini de ilgilendiren bir meseleymiş gibi gösterilerek haklılığı arttırılmaya çalışılıyor; çünkü zaten bizim dükkan adlarımızın yarısı Kazakça veya Tatarcadır, gazetelerimizin bir kısmı Azerbaycan Türkçesiyle yayımlanmaktadır, okullarımızda diğer Türk halklarının edebi eserleri asıllarından okutulmaktadır ya, o zaman q veya x işaretlerini kullanmamız bu bakımdan da yararlıdır. Üstüne üstlük, çocuklarımıza bu işaretleri öğretirken, kullanıldığı yere göre ses değerlerinin değiştiğini de açıklamalıyız. Değilse bir öğrenci Azeri Türkçesi qorxu "gorhu" (korku) sözünü Ingilizceymiş gibi okuyabilir.
>
> In addition this letter topic is trying to have its share increased by it being demonstrated that it is as if this were a problem concerning not only the Western language(s), but also the Turkic dialects and accents, because in fact half of our shop names are in Kazakh or Tatar, a portion of our newspapers are published in Azerbaijan Turkish, selections from the classic literary works of the other Turkic people are taught in our schools, and, thus, our use of the q or x characters is also worthwhile from this perspective. Most importantly, when teaching our children these letters, we should also explain that the value of the sound changes depending on the place it is used. If not, a student could read Azeri Turkish word qorxu "gorhu"

(korku) as if it were English.

Öztekten goes on to note that advocates of adopting the letters have even gone so far as to invoke the name of Atatürk, hypothesizing that Turkey's most venerated figure would support their adoption were he alive. Pleading with them not to willfully reinterpret Atatürk's legacy with regard to language, he writes:

> Gazete köşelerini tutmuş olan yazarlar… bir çok siyasi grubun yapmaya çalıştığı tavrını bu konuda da sergiliyorlar ve "Atatürk bunları bilseydi o da bu harfleri alfabeye alırdı" gibi ahkamları savuruyorlar. Yapmayın Allah aşkına, bu kadar hafife almayın…. Yabancı çizmeleri altındaki Türk toprağını kurtaran Atatürk, yabancıların (sadece batı değil doğu) dillerinin ne sözünü ne de harfini alırdı.
>
> The writers who hold the newspapers corners exhibit the attitude on this topic that a number of political groups have tried to take and bluster such pronouncements as, "Had Atatürk known this, he would have adopted these letters into the alphabet." Don't do this for God's sake, don't take it this lightly…. Atatürk who rescued the Turkish lands from under the boots of foreigners would have adopted neither the words nor the letters of the languages of foreigners (not just the west but also the east).

By reminding fellow members of the online forum of Atatürk's drive to create an independent state equally free of influence from the West and the East, Öztekten redirects the discussion back from pan-Turkism to nationalism, implying that Turkey would be best served by protecting its own national interests rather than overextending itself in aid of its Turkic counterparts. In this sense, Öztekten's perspective on the loanletters recalls Atatürk's decision nearly seventy years earlier to disappoint pan-Turkist yearnings by

renouncing relations with the "outside Turks" (*dış Türkler*) in favor of securing the core of the Turkish state.

In a rejoinder both to the notion of accepting orthographic borrowings as a gesture of fraternity with the Turkic peoples as well as a waypoint along the road to becoming a "big state," and to the notion of rejecting foreign loanletters in deference to national sanctity, Taha Akyol takes a more pragmatic approach. In an editorial for center-right daily newspaper *Milliyet* and posted to Turkoloji-L on 29 November, Akyol notes that: "The 29 letters do not represent some of the sounds found in the Turkishes of Turkey and the outside Turks" ("*29 harf Türkiye ve dis Türk Türkçelerinde bulunan bazi sesleri karsilamiyor*"). Acknowledging the reality of phonetic loss in modern standard Turkish resulting from a lack of graphic representation for these sounds, Akyol nonetheless rejects both a romantic preoccupation with reinstating the missing letters and an anachronistic obsession with ignoring them. He writes:

> Bugün mesele, alfabemizde bazi harflerin bulunmamasi sebebiyle Türkçemizdeki bazi seslerin kaybolmasi degildir. Bugün mesele "dünyaya açilmak"tan doguyor: Internet alfabesine asina olmamiz gerekiyor... Azerbaycan, Türkmenistan ve Özbekistan gibi Latin harflerine geçmis ama özel harf kullanimlari olan ülkelere gittigimizde hiç olmazsa trafik, vitrin ve TV yazilarini okuyacak kadar, o harfleri bilmemiz gerekiyor! Uluslararasi
>
> Today the issue is not that some sounds in our Turkish are lost because some letters are not found in our alphabet. Today the issue is born from "opening up to the world": It is necessary for us to become acquainted with the internet alphabet… we must know these letters if nothing else well enough that we can read what is written in traffic, shop windows and TVs when we go to countries like Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan which have switched to

transkripsiyon metinlerini okumak için de bu harfleri tanimamiz gerekiyor.	the Latin alphabet but use special letters. We must also recognize these letters in order to read the text of international transcriptions.

Locating the increasing use of foreign letters within Turkey in the exigencies of globalization, Akyol goes on to suggest that the country's ability to "open up to the world" (*"dünyaya açilmak"*) would increase were its citizens to familiarize themselves with and learn the proper use of these foreign characters "for informational purposes" ("*bilgi olarak"*). He writes:

Bugünkü alfabemize yeni harfler eklemek kargasa yaratabilir.... Bir de falanca tarihten önceki ve sonraki harfler ve yazim kurallari diye bir meseleyle karsilasmayalim! Mevcut harflerimizle yazmaya devam edelim. Ama bizde bulunmayan Q, X, W harflerini ve Türk cumhuriyetlerinin toplam sayisi 5 civarinda olan özel harflerini okullarimizda bilgi olarak ögretelim. Internete de, Türki cumhuriyetlere de daha kolay açiliriz…	Adding new letters to today's alphabet could create confusion.… And furthermore, let's not be confronted by the problem of the letters and writing rules from before and after history. Let us continue to write with our existing letters. But let us teach the Q, X, and W letters that we don't have and the total of roughly five special letters of the Turkic republics in our schools for informational purposes. In this way we will more easily open up both to the internet and to the Turkic republics…

Thus, while recommending against formal adoption of the letters *q*, *x*, and *w*, Akyol nonetheless proposes embracing the new realities of the post-Cold War global environment, suggesting that familiarity with the controversial letters would facilitate Turkey's integration with both the international community and the Turkic world and

hence support Turkey's bid to become a prominent actor both regionally and internationally.

Of additional interest here is the fact that although the course of discussion did inevitably turn to the potential effects of adopting loanletters on Turkey's relations with its eastern neighbors--namely the Turkic peoples of Central Asia and the Caucasus--it was a tangent that garnered far less commentary than might have been expected given that post-Cold War Turkish interest in orthography was inaugurated with the *ortak alfabe* project. However the simple reality is that just over ten years after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Turkey's relationship with the Turkic world is no longer discursively cast as a moral imperative or noble obligation (e.g., Başlamış 2001) as was generally the case in the immediate aftermath of the Soviet collapse and at the height of the *ortak dil* and *ortak alfabe* projects--but rather as a pragmatic means of advancing Turkey's bid to become a regional powerhouse and international powerbroker. This shift in discourse, in turn, reflects the more sober political discourse of Turkish leaders in their interactions with their Central Asian counterparts--a marked shift from what critics have denounced as the "personal politics" of the early post-Soviet era under Presidents Turgut Özal and Süleyman Demirel (Başlamış 2001). In short, just as the Turkic republics chose to focus on nationalism rather than pan-Turkism as the appropriate ideological vehicle for advancing their respective ambitions, and adopted their own national alphabets irrespective of the *ortak alfabe*, Turkey too turned inward in terms of not only orthographic politics but also state politics in a concerted effort to determine the courses of action that best suited its own particular interests in the post-Cold War era.

CONCLUSION

As the discourse of the online orthography debates reveals, orthography has the ability, during times of political and social change, to transcend its customary function as a graphic representation of spoken language to become a potent nexus for the imagination of national, supranational, and international identity. Yet, as the plethora of opinions from the wide range of language professionals and interested laypersons who contributed to the debates suggest, the reimagination of identity in the shadow of historic global shifts entails significant local and regional reverberations and is unlikely to be a straightforward, consensus-driven exercise.

Recalling Derrida's contention that the relationship between alphabetic writing and the ambient social constructs it indexes is more mediated and hence of a higher symbolic order than that between spoken language and the social world (c.f., chapter one), the ability of letters to succinctly and powerfully index not only a variety of different sounds, but also a comparable range of distinct social realities, introduces a crucial flexibility which accords orthographic characters the power to act as "floating signifiers," thus enabling the same letters to index multiple, often divergent, social constructs. It is this symbolic flexibility that enables some participants to the discussion to excoriate the letters *x*, *w*, and *q* as agents of Western imperialism and cultural annihilation, while allowing others to extol their potential to promote rapprochement among the diverse Turkic languages and peoples.

As a result, what appears on the surface to have been a straightforward debate over orthographic policy and practice also spoke to larger issues of national, supranational, and international identity, revealing contested notions of "Turkishness" and "foreignness" and exposing a deep-seated sense of communal angst over Turkey's place in the post-Cold War global hierarchy. In this sense, the orthographic debates serve as précis to the sociopolitical east-west push-pull exerted on Turkey in the post-Soviet period. In the end, however, it is interesting to note that the arguments both for and against adopting the loanletters parallel one another in a peculiar way such that whether the letters are conceived of as artifacts of the West or relics of the East is largely immaterial--except, of course, in the minds of those asserting these positions--for assessments of the relative value of either protecting or expanding the Turkish alphabet ultimately revolves around judgments, albeit differing, of how best to represent Turkish interests in the shifting post-Cold war era.

CODA

Over six years after the online orthography debates on Turkoloji-L, a news story from the city of Gaziantep in Turkey's predominantly Kurdish southeast demonstrates not only that orthography remains a potent resource in defining Turkish national identity but also that the multiple post-Cold War sociopolitical realties indexed by orthography remain a powerful hindrance in the linguistic unification of the Turkic world. On January 17, 2008, Turkish newspapers reported that Gaziantep's public prosecutor had issued a

directive ordering that day's edition of the local newspaper, *Çoban Ateşi*, removed from the newsstands and seized. Twenty-one affiliates of the newspaper were subsequently indicted under Article 222 of the Turkish Penal Code which criminalizes violations of Law 671 mandating the use of the Latin-based Turkish alphabet. The defendants were accused of having published selected poems and a short biography of a Kurdish writer identified as Abdula Pesew.

At issue was the final *w* in Pesew's name, a letter found in the Latin-based Kurdish alphabet but not in the Turkish alphabet. Although laws passed in support of Turkey's bid for accession to the European Union have slowly granted Turkey's Kurdish minority limited linguistic rights, publishing, broadcasting and orating in Kurdish nonetheless remains subject to continuing restrictions. Public prosecutors, who have pursued charges against Kurdish writers and newspaper publishers, for their use of the letter *w*, have cast such demonstrations of Kurdish orthographic choice as a deliberate challenge to the authority of the Turkish state.

Here, then, is further confirmation of the power of orthography as a floating signifier. Within the context of a bloody civil war between Turkish security forces and Kurdish guerillas that has raged for nearly thirty years and cost approximately 40,000 lives, the letter *w* indexes Kurdish rejection of Turkish cultural hegemony and demands for linguistic and cultural autonomy and hence provokes deep-seated Turkish apprehensions over alleged Kurdish aspirations to carve an independent state out of southeastern Turkey. Determined to thwart even such an attenuated assault on Turkey's territorial integrity as that implied by the use of *w*, the Turkish state has demonstrated its

willingness to employ whatever means necessary, no matter how absurd, to prevent the unauthorized Kurdish use of *w*.[118]

While the referent in this use of the letter *w* (Kurdish separatism) differs from the referents in the online alphabet debates of 2001 (Western imperialism vs. pan-Turkism)--not to mention the referent in ongoing debates over the creation of an *ortak alfabe* for use among the Turkic peoples (pan-Turkism)--the overarching issue, namely contested visions concerning the essential nature of the Turkish nation, remains the same. The irony is that even as Justice Ministry minions pursue criminalization of *w* use among Turkey's Kurdish population, the ministry's official webpage begins with a triple *w* (www.adalet.gov.tr). Moreover, even the Turkish Language Society continues to mark its online presence with a triple *w* (http://www.tdk.gov.tr) despite having remonstrated against the adoption of *w* borrowed from Western languages into the Turkish alphabet, and reminded listserver members that internet addresses were not required to begin with *www* in an official statement published to Turkoloji-L during the orthography debates: "However, there is no law specifying that 'www' absolutely must be found at the beginning of internet addresses, there are hundreds of webpage addresses that do not begin with 'www'" *("Ancak, internet adreslerinin başında mutlaka 'www' ile bulunacak*

[118] Interestingly, eight years after the online orthographic debates, a story linked to orthography once again swept the Turkish public, instigated by the suggestion that in the course of broader constitutional changes, the ruling AK Party might make changes to the article of the constitution that delineated the Turkish alphabet, allowing for the addition of the letters *w*, *x*, and *q* in an effort to allow for greater linguistic and cultural expression among Turkey's Kurds in the hopes that this would lead to their rapprochement with and eventual integration into the Turkish state.

diye bir kural yok, 'www' ile başlamayan yüzlerce sayfa adresi var").[119] The question that remains is whether the threat posed by the letter *w* is greater than the opportunity it affords. Until this question is resolved, and the numerous domestic concerns over altering the Turkish alphabet addressed, the *ortak dil* and *ortak alfabe* projects will continue to languish and the potential for the Turkic peoples to unite linguistically and thereby strengthen Turkey's standing in the international community will likely remain unrealized.

[119] As pointed out by the TDK, internet addresses do not necessarily have to begin with *www*. They do, however, have to include English domain names (e.g., ".gov" or ".com") and be written in the 26 letters of the English alphabet. Nonetheless, this may soon change. On October 30, 2009, the nonprofit organization that exercises oversight over internet addresses, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), unanimously approved the use of non-Latin alphabets in domain names. For more information, see: http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/2009/10/30/2009-10-30_internet_addresses_set_for_change_after_icann_votes_in_favor_of_foreign_characte.html?page=1#ixzz0VXZJKXK5).

Chapter Seven: From Conflict in Cooperation to Commonality in Difference?

The conventional wisdom of the Tower of Babel story is that the collapse was a misfortune. That it was the distraction or weight of many languages that precipitated the tower's failed architecture. That one monolithic language would have expedited the building, and heaven would have been reached.… Perhaps the achievement of Paradise was premature, a little hasty if no one could take the time to understand other languages, other views, other narratives.

Tony Morrison
The Nobel Lecture in Literature[120]

This dissertation has examined three phases in Turkey's post-Cold War relations with the ex-Soviet Turkic republics of Central Asia and the Caucasus through the lens of four distinct, yet circumstantially related, language ideological debates over the dimensions of linguistic and orthographic convention and practice, focusing first on the efforts of a loosely-defined community of practice, composed largely of Turkish linguists and language professionals operating at the meso level between the state and private citizenry, to strengthen the status and reach of the Turkish language through an ostensibly bilateral program of linguistic rapprochement with the Turkic peoples, and subsequently on the resistance such efforts provoked among the Turkic peoples themselves as well as ideologically opposed groups within Turkey proper. The aim of examining the discursive and metadiscursive negotiations over issues of language and orthography that coalesced around a series of language ideological debates among and between the Turkic peoples was to provide critical ethnographic detail of the micro-level processes by which new

[120] Morrison (1993:19).

sociopolitical relations within and between states were established in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union and attendant adjustments to the world order, descriptions of which have tended to focus on macro-level factors and state-level actors. In essence, this dissertation, by focusing on the efforts of meso-level actors in a domain generally considered peripheral to matters of the state and thus of little diplomatic import, offers a theoretical framework for examining the locally salient, micro-level processes behind national identity formation, regional affiliation, and international relations in the post-Cold War era, often captured under the rubrics of "nationalism," "regionalism," and "globalization," thereby posing a theoretical challenge to prevailing macro-level political and economic paradigms traditionally employed to explain sociopolitical shifts in the regional or international order.

Broadly speaking, this study was organized around the theoretical premise that language and orthography are inherently multifunctional, both indexical and constitutive of the material world, and thus function as symbolic resources onto which interests are projected, around which alliances are constructed, and through which power is exercised (Blommaert 1999). In this sense, I have argued, it becomes possible to study strategic efforts to establish and manage social relationships within and beyond the nation by attending to the ways in which issues of linguistic convention and practice are discursively and metadiscursively negotiated by interested individuals and groups. Thus, within the context of the Turkic world, recognition of the key role played by linguistic resources in the strategic management of social relations constituted a local ideological presupposition that consciously or unconsciously underpinned the endeavors of interested

actors, such that while the specific nature of the language ideological debates addressed in the preceding chapters has varied, they each coalesced around an underlying assumption in the salience of language and orthography to the constitution of the material world and, hence, the belief that social reality can be advantageously shaped through the strategic management of language-related resources--be they orthographic conventions or practices, naming conventions, language classification, or foreign lexical borrowings.

Insofar as the strategic management of linguistic resources has long been the purview of the interrelated fields of language planning and policy, this study has drawn on scholarly approaches from this field, but has also expanded on the extant literature by applying the critical lens of a language ideologies approach in suggesting that language planning, as a socially embedded practice, constitutes a discursive site in which not just language, but also aspects of the social world that are implicitly or explicitly linked through beliefs and attitudes to language, are actively negotiated. From this perspective, attempts at managing linguistic resources are seen as rooted in the presumption that linguistic "problems" are reflective of broader social issues and that addressing what ails language will ultimately contribute to resolving society's own ills. In this sense, it becomes possible to view efforts at strategic language management as influencing not simply the development of official linguistic policy, but also the dynamics of the ambient sociopolitical context that contributed to the (re)examination of linguistic practice and policy in the first place. As a result, the value of studying instances of language planning writ large from a language ideologies perspective rests not simply in assessing their relative success in effecting changes to linguistic policy and practice, but also in

exploring the attendant dimensions of sociopolitical contestation that bespeak the sociocultural, historical and political conditions which influence the course, direction, and dynamics of language management and thus either contribute to or mitigate against its objectives being met.

Put another way, insofar as we find in language planning a projection of identity politics onto linguistic form, an exploration of the metadiscursive debate surrounding instances of language planning allows for an examination of the bids for power by interested parties and the ambient sociopolitical and historical conditions that enable or preclude them. In this sense, this study of formal and informal efforts at language management within the post-Cold War era Turkic world falls squarely within a historiographical approach to language ideologies in which the opinions, attitudes, and values people hold toward language, as manifested in discursive practice and explicitly articulated in metalinguistic discourse, are investigated in relation to more general ideological developments within a society, born of its particular historical engagement with broader sociopolitical trends and geopolitical conditions. Moreover, it expands on the historiographical approach by exploring the ways in which specific historical and political influences over the development of language ideologies become increasingly explicit when groups with a common linguistic heritage and ostensibly shared presumptions about language come into direct contact within or beyond the bounds of the nation, with the result that they are found, despite sharing broad attitudes vis-à-vis the relationship between language and the material world, to nonetheless diverge in more culturally specific opinions.

In this sense, I have broadly argued that the inability of Turkish linguists and language professionals to effect the adoption of the *ortak alfabe* amongst the Turkic peoples or curtail the use of foreign loanletters and letter combinations as sociopolitical "acts of identity" or creative performative choices within Turkey proper is interesting insofar as it bespeaks ideological contestation over the nature of the putative language-related "problem" and/or the most appropriate means of resolving it that, in turn, suggests divergent linguistic cultures or sociopolitical objectives. Thus, in the case of the *ortak alfabe* project, while the convention of a series of early linguistic congresses designed to formulate a common Turkic alphabet was made possible by an ostensibly shared underlying presumption in the latent mutual intelligibility of the Turkic languages, which cast differences in orthographic convention as the source of patent communicative barriers among the Turkic peoples, the dynamics of metadiscursive negotiation during the course of the congresses revealed significant differences in perspective regarding the role of language and orthography in national consolidation and supranational affiliation which suggested fundamental divergences in the linguistic cultures of Turkey and the Turkic republics. While the Turks, for whom national identity formation had been an exercise in linguistic homogenization, or the standardization of regional linguistic diversity to create a unified Turkish language capable of representing the nation and its citizens, approached the creation of a supranational *ortak alfabe* project from the perspective of minimizing the orthographic representation of phonological diversity, the Turkic peoples, for whom national identity formation had revolved around enhancing their linguistic distinctiveness from the other Turkic peoples, had an understandably difficult time sacrificing

phonological repertoire, and thus national distinctiveness, in the name of supranational orthographic unity.

Thus, while both parties to the debate supported the creation of a common alphabet in aid of linguistic and sociocultural rapprochement, their different conceptions as to the form it should take revealed divergent expectations concerning the nature of the resulting supranational community which ultimately contributed to the failure of the project. While the Turks foresaw rapprochement as bringing the Turkic peoples closer to Turkey and, hence, imagined the Turkic world as an extension of the Turkish nation, the Turkic peoples envisioned a supranational community more in keeping with their experience of the Soviet Union in which national distinctiveness could be retained under an overarching supranational common identity. More importantly, however, the failure of the *ortak alfabe* project was presaged by the unspoken assumption, implicit to notions of the Turkic world as an extension of the Turkish nation, that the Turkish language, and hence society, was "superior"--an assumption which, although not made explicit during the course of the early linguistic congresses, became increasingly evident in the diffuse language ideological debate over linguistic classification and naming conventions of the Turkic languages, peoples, and republics that followed in their wake. The realization that the intent behind Turkish efforts to promote linguistic rapprochement in aid of sociocultural unification was "cooptive" rather than "cooperative" in nature provoked a general resistance among the Turkic peoples that effectively spelled the failure of the *ortak alfabe* project.

Similarly, with relation to debates over orthographic practice in Turkey proper, while all Turkish citizens share the basic underlying presumption that the Turkish language and alphabet act as symbolic representations of the country itself and, as such, should remain free of "foreign" influence, they diverge in their conceptualizations of that which is "foreign" and, by extension, that which is "native" on the basis of their sociopolitical orientation and sense of Turkey's place in the world. Thus, while linguistic conservatives, including, predominantly and most notably, the linguists and language professionals actively involved in promoting linguistic and sociocultural rapprochement with the Turkic peoples as part of the Turkic world community of practice viewed the Turkic languages, and, more recently, even Arabic and Persian, as acceptable sources of linguistic enrichment on the basis of the shared culture and/or religion of their speakers, they were quick to denounce as "foreign" the lexical and orthographic influence from Western languages which they accused their socially progressive counterparts of introducing into the language. By contrast, social progressives, who deliberately employed Western loanwords and orthographic conventions as a means of demonstrating not only their own conversance with Western languages and cultures but also their perception of Turkey's rightful position in the international community, viewed their conservative counterparts' attempts to promote linguistic rapprochement with the Turkic peoples not as a return to the linguistic fountainhead of their language, but as an attempt to introduce "alien" influence, where "alien" was defined on the basis of their conception of Turkey as a modern, westward-leaning nation. Thus, while cultural conservatives in Turkey focused on the "Turk-ness" of the "dış Türkler" ("outside Turks"), social

progressives focused on their "outside-ness." This discrepancy in focus not only coalesced around a long-standing rift in political identity within Turkey, but also served to define divergence perspectives on the opportunities afforded during the transitional period that obtained in the wake of the Soviet Union's collapse.

In essence, then, by revealing differences in linguistic culture which bespoke broader ideological divergences both between Turkey and the Turkic republics as well as within Turkey proper, the metalinguistic discourses and discursive practices surrounding the ortak alfabe project created a pervasive sense of sociocultural and sociopolitical difference which, in turn, influenced broader cooperative endeavors in the political and economic spheres and precipitated domestic contestation over the dimensions of regional and international affiliation in the post-Cold War era. In this sense, the "conflict in cooperation" that first emerged through the modality of language and orthography not only reflected the phased transition from "euphoric" to "sobering" to "disillusioned" but also actively contributed to constituting these three stages in the ambient political environment. In the final analysis, the gradual realization of "difference within commonality" was key to the post-Cold War transition process within the Turkic world, enabling both the Turks and the Turkic peoples to move past the simulacra of an imagined past and projection of an imagined future to delineate their respective identities within the contemporary sociopolitical context.

In concluding, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the broader theoretical implications of this investigation into the series of language ideological debates that collectively defined linguistic, sociocultural, and geopolitical relations in the post-Cold

War era Turkic world. From the perspective of a language ideologies approach, this dissertation has demonstrated the ability of orthography to act independently of language as a symbolic representation of sociocultural identity and sociopolitical orientation, such that attitudes toward orthography, like language attitudes, mediate between orthographic practice and real or imagined social structure. In this sense, this study expands on recent research into the ideological purposes to which orthography has been put in constructing sociopolitical identities at the local, regional, and national levels by exploring similar processes within the context of supranational relations. Here I have suggested the intrinsic interrelatedness of different levels of identity formation such that in the wake of upheaval to the established social order, attempts to standardize orthographic practice at the supranational level, by symbolically solidifying external affiliations, inevitably carries implications for the internal processes of national identity formation, while efforts to purify and otherwise manage orthographic convention at the national level, in identifying that which is "foreign," cannot help but have implications for national foreign policy orientation.

From a language planning perspective, this study has argued the importance of attending to the ideological valence inherent to efforts to negotiate social relationships through judicious language management; suggested the value of investigating not just formal, but also informal and quasi-formal efforts to manage the status and/or corpus of a language or languages; pointed to the ways in which historically produced divergences in linguistic culture may hinder good-faith cooperative language planning efforts; and contended that breaches of linguistic convention may serve as deliberate means of

contesting not only linguistic policy but also the authority to manage relationships through language.

Finally, this study has expanded on traditional conceptualizations of the role of language ideological debates within a historiographical approach to language ideology both by arguing the importance of attending to the ideological presuppositions that inform the organization of formal instances of debate, which may serve to limit participation or preclude "non-preferred" discourse, thereby creating a "lacuna of the unspoken," and by suggesting that diffuse, ambient level discourse that occurs between instances of formal debate and revolves around many of the same issues, but imposes fewer restrictions on participation and topic, constitutes another type of language ideological debate which may, indeed, represent the best opportunity for discovering unvarnished opinions and attitudes that for ideological, political, or pragmatic reasons often remain unspoken within the bounds of more formal contexts. The main theoretical contribution of this study thus lies in integrating the fields of language planning, language ideology, and language historiography, lending a language ideological perspective to language planning writ large by examining the ways in which efforts to strategically manage orthography by formal, quasi-formal, and informal means in aid of negotiating of sociopolitical affiliations in the supranational and international context were mediated by historically produced divergences in linguistic culture enacted through the instrumentality of discursive and metadiscursive debate.

As a final note, it is interesting to observe that orthography continues to play a role in national identity politics and supranational relations within the putative Turkic

world. In Turkey, at the behest of advocates of linguistic purification seeking to staunch the spread of foreign orthographic conventions in technology-related contexts, the country's Telecommunications Board recently prohibited the importation of cell phones that do not support the six "special characters" of the Turkish alphabet and banned cell phone providers from imposing additional surcharges or higher rates on text messages containing these characters.[121] While such decisions have ensured the availability of the Turkish orthographic option and removed the economic disincentive for choosing Turkish over more "standard" Western characters, it remains to be seen whether this will suffice to shift the political economy of orthographic practice in Turkey away from strategic and creative use of foreign orthographic conventions.

Meanwhile, in a reversal of Kazakhstan's decision to retain the Cyrillic alphabet, the country's Minister of Culture and Mass Communications, in the course of unveiling the Conception of State Language Policy for 2011-2020, announced that "life itself" will, in due time, require Kazakhstan to adopt a Latin-based orthography. While the minister was clear to stipulate that the "new" alphabet would be based on the Latin-based Kazakh alphabet of the 1920s,[122] rather than the ortak alfabe, the latter received a recent boost, when the creation of a common Turkic alphabet was made the second item on the agenda of the Summit of Turkish Speaking Countries (Türk Dili Konuşan Ülkeler Zirvesi). The

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[121] Please find a report on this issue at the following website: http://www. dildernegi.org.tr/TR/BelgeGoster.aspx?F6E10F8892433CFFAAF6AA849816B2EFC78 A84C0A88D75FE, last accessed August 2, 2011.

[122] Please find a report on this issue at the following website: http://www.kyivpost. com/news/opinion/ op_ed/detail/90232/, last accessed August 2, 2011.

notion of a Turkic lingua franca has also been resuscitated, albeit in quite altered form, involving the promotion of one of the Turkic languages to a language of wider communication within the Turkic world rather than the amalgamation of the Turkic "dialects" originally envisioned by ortak dil advocates.

The first steps toward realizing this revised objective were made at the 2010 Summit of Turkish Speaking Countries when Istanbul Turkish was unanimously declared "Yüksek Türkçe" ("High Turkish"), or the common language for communication among the Turkic heads of state in attendance at the summit.[123] With issues of language and orthography still so salient to the processes of identity politics and sociopolitical affiliation among the Turkic peoples, it seems possible that recent developments on this front may herald a fourth stage in Turkic world relations in which matters of a linguistic and orthographic nature may play a key role in fostering the development of a "special relationship" among the Turkic peoples based on the recognition of their "commonality in difference."

[123] Please find a report on this issue at the following website: http://www.tdtkb.org/content/t%C3%BCrk%C3%A7e-konu%C5%9F-%C3%BClkeler-zirvesi-istanbul-t%C3%BCrk%C3%A7esinde-birle%C5%9Fti, last accessed August 2, 2011.

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